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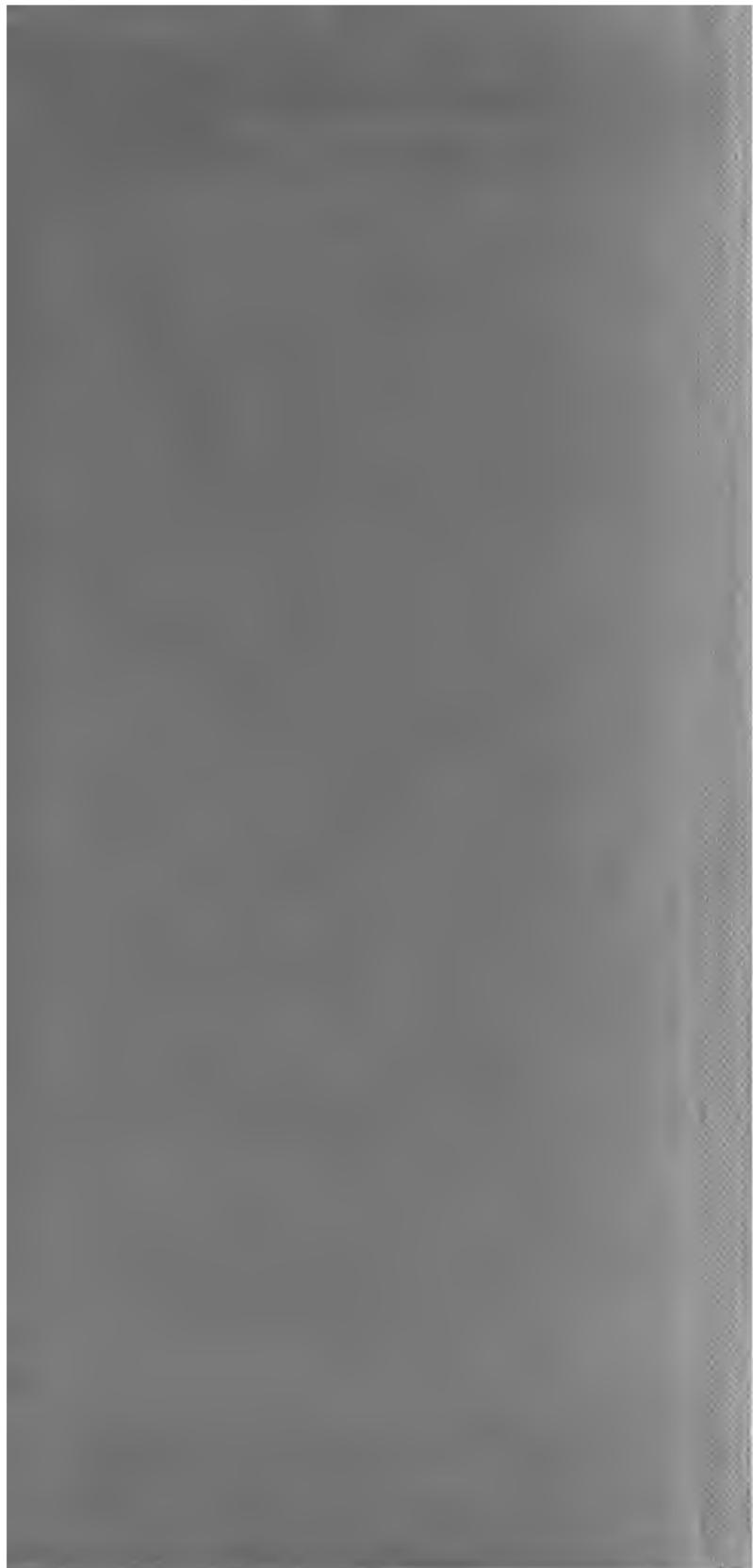
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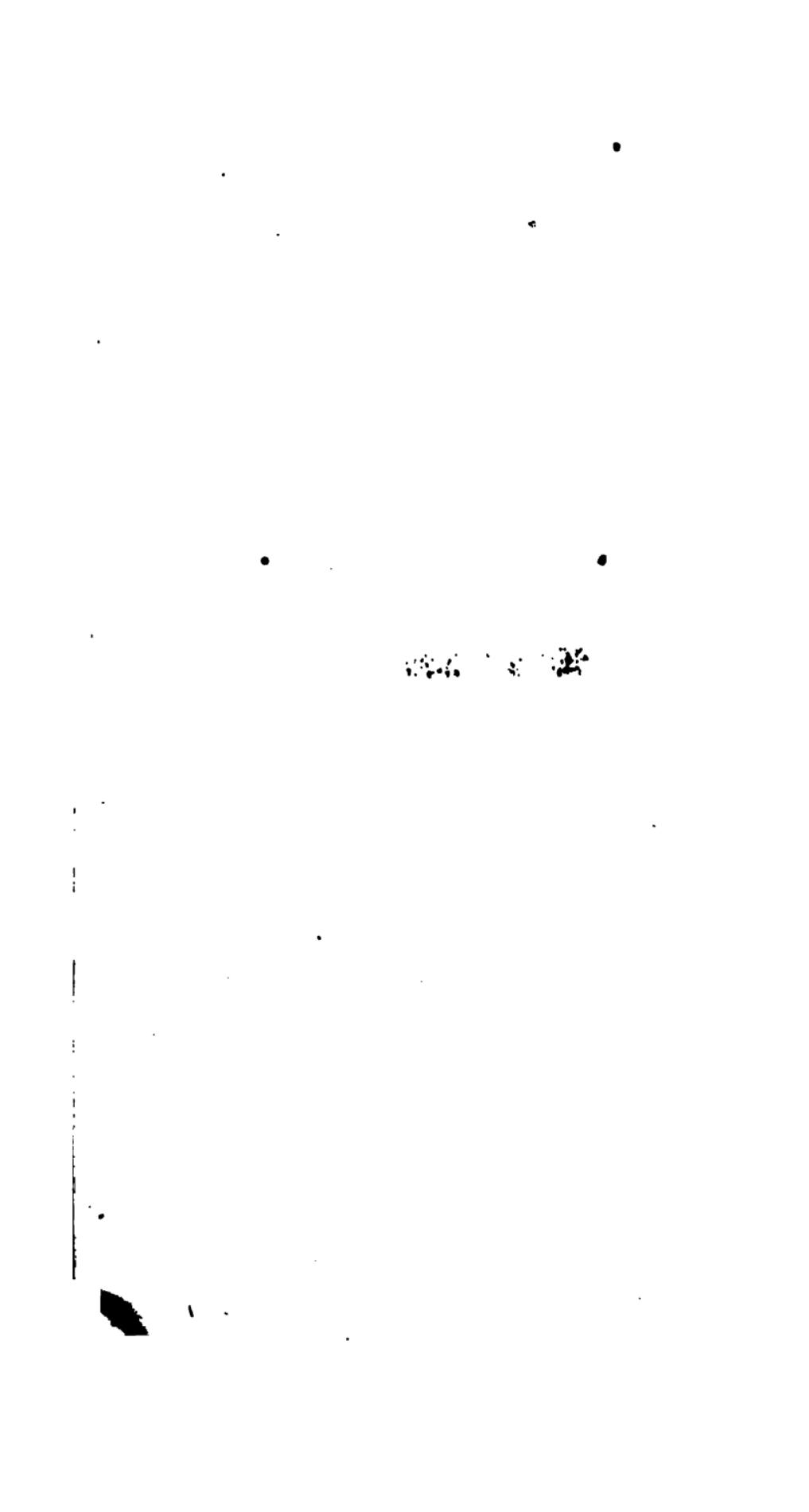
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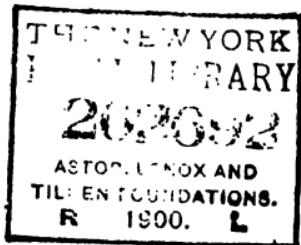








HORSE SHOE ROBINSON.



BROWN-GOOD COLLECTION.

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1
by *Carey, Lea & Blanchard*, in the Clerk's Office of the Dis-
Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

ARMAND WILSON
COLLECTOR
WILLIAM H. WILSON

HORSE SHOE ROBINSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE SERGEANT AND HIS COMRADE PROJECT AN EXPEDITION WHICH FURNISHES THE ENSIGN AN OPPORTUNITY OF ENJOYING THE PICTURESQUE.

As soon as David Ramsay had departed with the maiden for Musgrave's mill, Robinson ordered his own and Christopher Shaw's horse to be saddled, and another to be made ready for St. Jermyn. His next care was to determine upon a secure place of retreat,—reflecting that the news of the capture of the ensign must soon reach the British posts, and that the country would be industriously explored with a view to his rescue. A spot known to the woodsmen of this region by the name of the Devil's Ladder, which was situated in the defile of a mountain-brook that emptied into the Ennoree, occurred to Christopher Shaw as the most secret fastness within their reach. This spot lay some twenty miles westward of Ramsay's, accessible by roads but little known, and surrounded by a district which grew more wild and rugged the nearer it approached the defile.

Here it was supposed that the party might arrive by day-light the next morning, and remain for a few days at small risk of discovery; and thither, accordingly, it was resolved they should repair.

This being settled, Horse Shoe now procured a supply of provisions from mistress Ramsay, and then proceeded to arm himself with the sword and pistols of the ensign; whilst Christopher suspended across his body the sword of Goliath,—as the sergeant called the brand he had snatched up at Blackstock's—and also took possession of one of the captured muskets.

'If it don't go against your conscience, mistress Ramsay,'—said Horse Shoe, when the preparations for the journey were completed.—'I would take it as a favour, in case any interlopers mought happen to pop in upon you, if you would just drop a hint that you have hearn that Sumpter's people had been seen about these parts. It would have an amazing good bearing on the Tories:—Besides making them warry how they strayed about the woods, it would be sure to put the blood-hounds on a wrong scent, if they should chance to be searching for the young ensign.—I know you women are a little ticklish about a fib,—but then it's an honest trick of the war sometimes. And to make you easy about it, it will be no more than the truth to say you did hear it,—for, you obsarve, I tell you so now.'

'But,'—replied the scrupulous matron,—'if they should ask me who told me—what should I answer?'—

'Why,'—said the sergeant, hesitating,—'just out with it—tell 'em you hearn it from one Horse Shoe Robinson:—that 'll not make the news the worse in point of credit. And be sure, good woman, above all things, to remind David, when he gets back to-night, that the rank and file, in our prison yonder, are not to be turned loose before three o'clock in the morning.'

This last caution was repeated to Andy, who still performed the duty of a sentinel at the door of the out-house. All things being now arranged for their departure, ensign St. Jermyn was brought from the chamber where he had been confined, and was invited to join the sergeant and Christopher at supper, before they set out. This meal was ably and rapidly discussed by the stout yeomen, and scarcely less honoured by the prisoner, whom the toils and privations of the day had brought to the enjoyment of a good appetite.

With many cheering and kind expressions of encouragement from the sergeant, the young officer prepared to comply with the demands of his captors, and was soon in readiness to attend them. Robinson lifted him into his saddle with a grasp as light as if he was dealing with a boy, and then bound him by a surcingle to the horse's back, whilst he offered a good-humoured apology for the rigour of this treatment:—

'It is not the most comfortable way of riding, Mr. Ensign,'—he said with a chuckle,—'but fast bind, fast find, is a most an excellent good rule for a traveller in the dark. I hope you don't think I take any pleasure in oncommoding you, but it is my intention to lead your horse by the rein to-night,—and this friend of mine will keep in the rear. So, by way of a caution, I would just signify to you that if you should think of playing a prank, you will sartainly bring some trouble upon your head,—as one or another of us would, in that case, be obliged to fire. It is nothing more than military punctilium to give you a friendly warning of this.'

'You might dispense with this severity, I should think,'—replied the prisoner,—'upon my pledge of honour that I will make no effort to escape.'

'I can take no pledge in the dark,'—returned Horse Shoe.—'Day-light mought make a difference. If we should happen to fall in with any of your gangs, I'm thinking a pledge wouldn't come to much more than a cobweb, when I should ax you to gallop out of the way of your own people. Flesh is weak, as the preacher says; and, to my mind, it's a little the weaker when the arm is strong or the foot swift. Temptation is at the bottom of all backsliding. No, no, Mr. Ensign, you may get away—if you can; we'll take care of you whilst we're able—that's a simple understanding.'

Without further speech the party proceeded on their journey. They travelled as rapidly as was consistent with the ease of the prisoner, and the nature of the ground over which they had to move. For the first eight or ten miles, their route lay across a country with but few impediments, except such as arose from the unseasonable hour of the ride. After this they found the

toil and hazard of travel continually increasing. They had been retreating from the settled country towards a rough wilderness, which was penetrated only by an obscure road, so little beaten as to be scarce discernible in the faint star-light, and which it required all Christopher's skill in woodcraft to follow. Our travellers, consequently, often lost their way, and were obliged to get down from their horses and grope about to ascertain the path. The stars had shone all night through a cloudless firmament, but the deep shade of the forest thickened around the wanderers, and it was frequently with difficulty, even, that they could discern each other's figures.

They reached, at length, the small stream upon whose banks, some miles above, was situated the place to which their steps were directed; and they were thus rendered more sure of their road, as they had only to follow the ascending course of the brook. The delays and impediments of the journey had nearly outrun the night, and whilst our travellers were yet some two or three miles from their destination, the first traces of morning began to appear in the east. The increasing light disclosed to them the nature of the scenery around. A limpid rivulet tumbled over a rocky channel, girt with a profusion of bush and briar,—amongst which were scattered a thousand wild-flowers that, renovated by the dew, threw forth a delicious perfume. A succession of abrupt hills, covered with the varied foliage of a rich forest-growth, bounded the brook on either side. Occasional rocks jutted above the heads of the travellers as they wound along the paths, worn by the wild cattle in the bottom of the dell.

Both Robinson and Shaw had dismounted when they entered this defile, and whilst the former led the horse of the prisoner, his companion preceded him to explore the doubtful traces of the road, which frequently became so obscure as to render it necessary to seek a passage in the bed of the stream. During all this progress, Horse Shoe's good nature and light-heartedness were unabated. He conversed with the prisoner in the same terms of friendly familiarity that he did with Shaw, and neglected

no attention that might in any degree relieve the irksomeness of St. Jermyn's necessary thraldom.

That peculiar conformation of country which had given rise to the name of the place, to which they were conducting the prisoner, was now to be discerned at some little distance ahead. It presented a series of bold crags of granite intermixed with slate, in which rock piled upon rock presented a succession of shelves,—each beetling over its base, and thus furnishing a shelter against the weather. Some of these were situated near the bank of the stream, projecting over the water,—whilst others towered at different heights, in such a manner as to bear a resemblance to a flight of huge steps cut into the slope of the mountain, and by this likeness, doubtless, suggesting the imaginative name by which the spot was known to the few hunters to whom it was familiar. The cavern-like structure of these ledges abundantly supplied the means of concealment, to both men and horses, from the casual notice of such persons as accident might have brought into this sequestered defile.

When the party arrived at the foot of the Devil's Ladder, it was with great satisfaction that the two conductors, no less than their prisoner, made a halt. A short time was spent in selecting a spot, amongst the impending cliffs, of such a character as might afford the advantage of shelter, as well as the means of ready look-out and escape in case of discovery or pursuit. The place chosen was about half way up the hill, where the ridge of a promontory enabled the occupants to see some distance up and down the valley; whilst the crag itself contained within its recesses a chamber sufficiently large for the purpose to which it was to be applied. A natural platform, near this point, allowed sufficient space for the horses, which might be conducted there by a sideling path up the slope: at the same time, the means of retreat were furnished by the nature of the ground towards the top of the hill.

To this place of security the ensign was ordered by his guard, and, being released from his bonds, he dismounted and threw himself at length upon the mossy surface of the rock, where he lay wearied in body and dejected in

mind. The horses were taken in charge by Shaw; provisions were produced, and all arrangements of caution and comfort were made for passing the next two or three days in this wild sojourn.

Here, for the present, we must leave our adventurers, to tell of other matters that are proper to be made known to the reader of this history.

In due time, David Rainsay returned from Musgrove's. Precisely at three o'clock in the morning, the soldiers were released according to the terms of the parole: and my reader will, no doubt, be pleased to hear that Andy, being discharged from duty, went to bed as drowsy as e'er a man of mould after a feat of glory, and slept with a sleep altogether worthy of his heroic achievement.

The next day passed by, at Ramsay's dwelling, with a varied and fearful interest to the family. They had received intelligence, before night, of the event of Butler's trial, and had reason to rejoice that Mary Musgrove had so well played her part in the delivery of the letter. They were apprized, also, of the reward that had been offered for the discovery of the bearer of this letter, and were informed that detachments of horse were out to scour the country in quest of the ensign. These tidings filled them with apprehension. It occurred to Ramsay that if, perchance, the released prisoners should fall in with any of the parties of the loyalists, they would, of course, relate their story, and thus bring down the full rancour of the tory wrath upon his household: this would also lead with more certainty to the pursuit of Horse Shoe. There was still good reason to hope that the liberated men might not so soon be able to give the alarm; inasmuch as they were more likely to shape their course towards Fort Ninety-Six than to repair to Innis's camp, where they might be forced to do duty, as much against their inclinations as against their parole. They might even, from a natural aversion to labour, prefer loitering about the country rather than put themselves voluntarily in the way of military operations.—

‘Come what will of it,’—said Ramsay, summing up the chances for and against him,—‘I will be ready for the worst. Many better men have given all they had to the

cause of independence, and I will not flinch from giving my share. They may burn and break down,—but, thank God, I have a country—aye,—and a heart and an arm to stand by it!—

On the same evening, towards sun-down, a horseman drew up his rein at Ramsay's door. He was young—in the prime of early manhood: his dress was that of a rustic; his equipment showed him to be a traveller,—a weary one, from the plight of his horse,—and, like most travellers of the time, he was armed. He did not stand to summon any one to the door, but put his hand upon the latch with eager haste, and entered with the familiarity of one acquainted with the place. Mistress Ramsay was seated at her spinning-wheel, anxiously brooding over the tales of the day. Her husband reclined in his chair, silently and thoughtfully smoking his pipe. They both sprang up at once, as the visiter crossed the threshold, and with fervent joy greeted their son John Ramsay.—The household was clamorous with the affectionate salutations of the parents, of the brothers and sisters, and of the domestics. John was the eldest of Ramsay's children, and had just reached his paternal roof after an absence of some months, during which he had been in service with Sumpter. The gathering in of the members of a family around the domestic board, in times of peril and distress, is one of the luxuries of the heart that in peace we cannot know. The arrival of John Ramsay at the present moment was a source of the liveliest happiness to his parents. They needed a cheerful as well as a resolute comforter. John had, only twenty-four hours previous, left Sumpter near Rocky Mount,—immediately after the battle, with the British convoy, was won. He was sent with despatches to colonel Williams, a whig partizan of note, who was now supposed to be in the neighbourhood of the Saluda.—These had some reference to the military movements of the parties;—and John Ramsay was permitted by Sumpter to make a short halt at his father's house.

In the first hour after his arrival, he had given to the family the history of his homeward ride. He had discovered that hostile forces—of which, until his journey

was nearly finished, he had heard nothing—were encamped in the neighbourhood: that a court martial had been sitting for the trial of an American officer, as a spy, and had condemned him to be shot. He had been apprised, moreover, that small parties were out, riding into every corner of the country. He himself had nearly been surprised by one of these, as he endeavoured to make his way to the house of Allen Musgrove, where he had proposed to himself a visit, even before he came to his father's,—but, fearing something wrong, he had fled from them, and baffled their pursuit,—although they had chased him more than a mile: he had, in consequence, been deprived of the opportunity of visiting the miller.—

‘Although it is four months since we have seen you, John,’—said the dame, with a tone of affectionate chiding,—‘yet, you would turn aside to get under Allen Musgrove’s roof, before you thought of the arms of your mother!’—

John’s sun-burnt cheek blushed crimson red as he replied,—‘It was but a step out of the way, mother: and I should not have stayed long.—Mr. Musgrove and his folks are safe and well, I hope?—and Christopher?’

‘Tut boy!—speak it out, and don’t blush about it,’—interrupted the father briskly:—‘she is a good girl, and you needn’t be ashamed to name her,—as you ought to have done, first and before all the rest. Mary is well, John, and has just proved herself to be the best girl in the country.’—

This little passage of mirth between the parents and their son, led to a full narrative by David Ramsay of the events which had transpired in the last two or three days, concluding with the capture of the ensign, and the retreat of Horse Shoe and Christopher Shaw to the Devil’s Ladder. The communication wrought a grave and thoughtful mood in the young soldier. It presented a crisis to him for immediate action. He was wearied with a long ride; but it seemed to him to be no time for rest.—

‘Father,’—he said, after turning over in his thoughts the intelligence he had just received,—‘it was a brave and beautiful thing for so young a lad as Andy to do—and the taking of the ensign has served a useful pur-

pose—but it brings this house and family into danger. And I fear for poor Mary.—Christopher Shaw must get back to the mill,—and quickly too. His absence will bring his uncle's family into trouble.—I will take Christopher's place—and go to Horse Shoe's assistance this night. We may take the prisoner with us to Williams.'

'To-night!'—said the mother anxiously,—'you would not leave us to-night, John?'—

'Aye, to-night, wife,'—answered David Ramsay—'The boy is right: there is no time to spare.'

'Have mercy on us!'—exclaimed the dame,—'to ride so far to-night, after so heavy a journey!—John, you have not strength.'—

'Dear mother,'—said John,—'think, that you are all in danger—and that Mary, who has behaved so well, might be suspected, and brought to harm. I must hurry forward to colonel Williams—and this road by the Devil's Ladder is far out of my way. No, I am not so much fatigued, mother, as you suppose. I will rest for a few hours, and then try the woods. Day break, I warrant, shall find me not far from Horse Shoe.'

John Ramsay was not above six and twenty. He was endued with a stout and manly frame, well adapted to hard service; and this was associated with a bold and intelligent countenance, which, notwithstanding the dint of wind and weather, was handsome. He had for a year or two past, been actively engaged in the war, and his manners had, in consequence, acquired that maturity and decision which are generally found in those whose habits of life render them familiar with perils. On the present occasion he regarded the necessity of his co-operation with Robinson so urgent, that no other thought crossed his mind but that which belonged to the care of putting himself in condition to make his services effectual.

With this view he now directed his horse to be carefully tended; then, having taken a hearty meal, he retired to rest, desiring that he might be waked up at midnight, when he proposed to follow the path of Horse Shoe and his comrade.

CHAPTER II.

A RETREAT AFTER THE MANNER OF XENOPHON.

THE next morning, a little after sun-rise, as Robinson was holding the watch on the outer ledge of the rock, in a position that enabled him to survey the approaches to the spot through the valley, as well as to keep his eye upon the ensign and Christopher Shaw, who were both asleep under cover of the crag, he was startled by a distant noise of something breaking through the bushes on the margin of the brook. At first, it struck him that this was caused by deer stalking up the stream; but he soon afterwards descried the head and shoulders of a man whose motions showed him to be struggling through the thicket towards the base of the hill. This person, at length, reached a space of open ground, where he halted and looked anxiously around him, thus revealing his figure, as he sat on horseback, to the observation of the sergeant; who, in the meantime, had taken advantage of a low pine tree and a jutting angle of the rock to screen himself from the eager eye of the traveller,—at least, until he should be satisfied as to the other's character and purpose.

A loud and cheerful halloo, several times repeated by the stranger, seemed to indicate his quest of a lost companion; and this gradually drew the sergeant, with a wary motion, from his hiding place,—until assuring himself that the comer was alone, he stepped out to the edge of the shelf of rock, and, presenting his musket, peremptorily gave the common challenge of 'who goes there?'—

'A friend to Horse Shoe Robinson,'—was the reply of the visiter—in whom my reader recognises John Rainsay.

Before further question might be asked and answered, John had dismounted from his horse and clambered to the platform, where he greeted the sergeant and the hastily-awakened Christopher Shaw, with a hearty shake of the hand; and then proceeded to communicate the pressing objects of his visit, and to relate all that he had learned of the recent events during his short stay at his father's house.

In the consultation that followed these disclosures, Ramsay earnestly urged his comrades to make instant preparation to quit their present retirement, and to attempt the enterprise of conducting the prisoner to Williams, who was supposed to be advancing into the neighbourhood of a well known block-house, or frontier fortification, on the Saluda, about forty miles from their present position.

The message with which Ramsay was charged from Sumpter to Williams made it necessary that he should endeavour to reach that officer as soon as possible; and, the sergeant, rejoicing in the thought of being so near a strong body of allies, who might render the most essential aid to the great object of his expedition, readily concurred in the propriety of the young trooper's proposal. This enterprise was also recommended by the necessity of taking some immediate steps to preserve the custody of the ensign, whose capture had already been so serviceable to the cause of Arthur Butler. In accordance, moreover, with John Ramsay's anxious entreaty, Christopher Shaw, it was determined, should hasten back to the mill at the earliest moment.

A speedy departure was, therefore, resolved on, and accordingly all things were made ready, in the course of the next hour, to commence the march. At the appointed time the ensign was directed to descend into the valley, where he was once more bound to his horse. The conferences between the sergeant and his two comrades had been held out of the hearing of the prisoner; but it was now thought advisable to make him acquainted with the late proceedings that had transpired with regard to Butler, and especially with the respite that had been given to that officer by Innis.—This communication was accompanied by an intimation that he would best consult his own comfort and safety by a patient submission to the restraints that were put upon him,—inasmuch as his captors had no disposition to vex him with any other precautions than were necessary for his safe detention during the present season of peril to Butler.

With this admonition the party began their journey. The first two or three hours were occupied in returning, by the route of the valley, to the Ennoree. When they

reached the river they found themselves relieved from the toils of the narrow and rugged path by which they had threaded the wild mountain dell, and introduced into an undulating country covered with forest, and intersected by an occasional but unfrequent road leading from one settlement to another. Here Christopher Shaw was to take leave of his companions,—his path lying along the bank of the Ennoree,—whilst the route to be pursued by the others crossed the river and extended thence southward to the Saluda. The young miller turned his horse's head homeward, with some reluctance at parting with his friends in a moment of such interest, and bore with him many messages of comfort and courage to those whom he was about to rejoin—and more particularly from the sergeant to Butler, in case Christopher should have the good fortune to be able to deliver them. At the same time Horse Shoe and John Ramsay, with the prisoner, forded the Ennoree, and plunged into the deep forest that lay upon its further bank.

For several hours they travelled with the greatest circumspection, avoiding the frequented roads and the chance of meeting such wayfarers as might be abroad on their route. It was a time of great anxiety and suspense, but the habitual indifference of military life gave an air of unconcern to the conduct of the soldiers, and scarcely affected, in any visible degree, the cheerfulness of their demeanour.

They reached, at length, the confines of a cultivated country—a region which was known to be inhabited by several Tory families. To avoid the risk of exposure to persons who might be unfriendly to their purpose, they thought it prudent to delay entering upon this open district until after sun-set, that they might continue their journey through the night. The difficulty of ascertaining their road in the dark, and the danger of seeking information from the few families whose habitations occurred to their view, necessarily rendered their progress slow. The time was, therefore, passed in wary silence and persevering labour, in the anxious contemplation of the probability of encountering some of the enemy's scouts.

At break of day they stopped to refresh themselves;

and the contents of Horse Shoe's wallet, unhappily reduced to a slender supply of provisions, were distributed amongst the party. During this halt, John Ramsay commanded the ensign to exchange his dress with him; and our faithful ally was converted, by this traffic, for the nonce, into a spruce, well-looking and gay young officer of the enemy's line.

The most hazardous portion of their journey now lay before them. They were within a few miles of the Saluda; from whence, at its nearest point, it was some six or seven more, down the stream, to the Block house—the appointed rendezvous, where it was yet a matter of uncertainty whether Williams had arrived. The space between the travellers and the river was a fertile and comparatively thickly-peopled region, of which the inhabitants were almost entirely in the tory interest. The

broad day-light having overtaken them on the confines of this tract, exposed them to the greatest risk of being questioned. They had nothing left but to make a bold effort to attain the river by the shortest path; and thence to pursue the bank towards the rendezvous.

'Courage, John,'—said Horse Shoe, smiling at the new garb of his comrade,—'you may show your pretty feathers to-day to them that are fond of looking at them. And you, my young clodpole,—ride like an honest Whig—or I mought find occasion to do a uncomfortable thing, by putting a bullet through and through you. Excuse the liberty, sir, for these are ticklish times,—but I shall ondoubtedly be as good as my word.'

Our adventurers soon resumed their journey. They had come within a mile of the Saluda, without interruption, and began to exchange congratulations that the worst was passed, when they found themselves descending a sharp hill which jutted down upon an extensive piece of pasture ground.—One boundary of this was watered by a brook, along whose margin, a fringe of willows, intermixed with wild shrubbery of various kinds, formed a screen some ten or fifteen feet in height. As soon as this range of meadow was observed, our cautious soldiers halted upon the brow of the hill to reconnoitre; and perceiving nothing to excite their apprehension, they ven-

tered down, upon the track of an ill-defined road, which took a direction immediately over the broadest portion of the field.

They had scarcely crossed the brook at the bottom of the hill, before they heard the remote voices of men in conversation, and the tones of a careless laugh. On looking towards the upper section of the stream, they were aware of a squad of loyalist cavalry who came riding, in the shade of the willows, directly towards the spot where the travellers had entered upon the meadow. The party consisted of seven or eight men who were, at this instant, not more than one hundred paces distant.

“They are upon us, sergeant!”—exclaimed John Ramsay.—“Make sure of the prisoner: retreat as rapidly as you can. Leave me to myself.—Make for the Block house,—I will meet you there.”

With these hasty intimations, he pricked his courser up to full speed, and shaped his flight directly across the open field, in full view of the enemy.

Horse Shoe, at the same moment, drew a pistol, cocked it,—then threw the rein of St. Jermyn’s horse into the hand of the rider, as he cried out:—

“Back across the branch and into the woods!—Push for it,—or by G— you are a dead man! On, on!”—he added, as he rode at high speed, immediately beside the ensign,—“a stumble, or a whisper above your breath, and you get the bullet. Fly—your life is in your horse’s heels!”

The resolute tone of the sergeant had its effect upon his prisoner, who yielded a ready obedience to the pressing orders, and bounded into the thicket, with as much alacrity as if flying from an enemy.

Meantime the troopers, struck with the earnest haste of one whose dress bespoke a British officer, speeding across the field, did not doubt that they had afforded this timely opportunity for the escape of a prisoner from the hands of the Whigs.

“Wheel up, lads,—shouted the leader of the squad,—“it is the ensign! Wheel up and form a platoon to cut off the pursuit.—We have him safe out of their clutches!”—

Impressed with the conviction that a considerable force of whig cavalry were at hand, the troopers directed all their efforts to cover what they believed ensign St. Jermyn's retreat,—and were now seen formed into a platoon, and moving towards the middle of the plain, in such a manner as to place themselves between the fugitive and his supposed pursuers. Here they delayed a few minutes, as if expecting an attack; until finding that the object of their solicitude had safely crossed the field and plunged into the distant woods, they rode away, at a rapid pace, in the same direction. When they reached the farther extremity of the open ground, they halted for an instant—turned their eyes back towards the spot of their first discovery—and, finding that no attempt was made to follow, gave a hearty huzza and rode onward in search of their prize.

The stratagem had completely succeeded: Ramsay had escaped, and Horse Shoe had withdrawn his prisoner into the neighbouring wood upon the hill,—where he was able to observe the whole scene. After a brief interval, the sergeant resumed his journey, and, with all necessary circumspection, bent his steps towards the river, where he arrived without molestation,—and thence he continued his march in the direction of the rendezvous.

John Ramsay did not stop until he had crossed the Saluda, and advanced a considerable distance on the opposite bank, where, to his great joy, he was encountered by a look-out party of Williams' regiment. Our fugitive had some difficulty in making himself known to his friends, and escaping the salutation which an enemy was likely to obtain at their hands; but when he surrendered to them, and made them acquainted with the cause of his disguise, the party instantly turned about with him, and proceeded in quest of the sergeant and his prisoner.

It was not long before they fell in with the small detachment of Connelly's troopers,—as the late masters of the meadow turned out to be—who were leisurely returning from their recent exploit. These, finding themselves in the presence of superior numbers, turned to flight. Not far behind them Ramsay and his new com-

panions encountered Horse Shoe; and the whole party proceeded without delay to Williams' camp.

Colonel Williams had reached the Block House on the preceding evening with a force of two hundred cavalry. Clarke and Shelby happened, at this juncture, to be with him; and these three gallant partizans were now anxiously employed in arranging measures for that organized resistance to the Tory Dominion which fills so striking a chapter in the history of the Southern war, and which it had been the special object of Butler's mission to promote. Horse Shoe was enabled to communicate to Williams and his confederates the general purpose of this mission, and the disasters which had befallen Butler in his attempt to reach those with whom he was to co-operate. This intelligence excited a lively interest in behalf of the captive, and it was instantly determined to make some strenuous effort for his deliverance. Whilst these matters were brought into consultation by the leaders, Horse Shoe and John Ramsay mingled amongst the soldiers, in the enjoyment of that fellowship which forms the most agreeable feature in the associations of the camp.

CHAPTER III.

BUTLER'S DIFFICULTIES INCREASE.—INNIS FINDS OCCASION TO THINK OF THE ADAGE—‘THERE'S MANY A SLIP, BETWIXT THE CUP AND THE LIP.’—

WHEN Arthur Butler was conducted back to his place of confinement, after his trial, orders were given that no one should be allowed to approach him, except the officer to whom was intrusted his safe custody.—The intercourse of this person with him was short and concerned, only, with the scant accommodation which his condition required. He was, therefore, deprived of all chance of becoming acquainted with the extraordinary events that had led to his present respite from death. In the interrogations that had, during the first moments of excitement, been put to him, in regard to the letter, he was

not told its import; from what quarter it had come; nor how it affected his fate. He only knew, by the result, that it had suspended the purpose of his immediate execution; and he saw that it had produced great agitation at head-quarters. He found, moreover, that this, or some other cause, had engendered a degree of exasperation against him, that showed itself in the retrenchment of his comforts, and in the augmented rigour of his confinement.

Agitated with a thousand doubts, his mind was too busy to permit him to close his eyes during the night that followed; and in this wakeful suspense, he could sometimes hear, amongst the occasional ramblers who passed under his window, an allusion, in their conversation, to a victory gained over the royal troops. Coupling this with the name of Sumpter, which was now and then uttered with some adjective of disparagement, he conjectured that Horse Shoe had probably fallen in with that partisan, and was, peradventure, leading him to this vicinity. But this conclusion was combatted by the fact that there seemed to be no alarm in the camp, nor any preparations on foot, either, for instant battle or retreat. Then the letter—that was a mystery altogether impenetrable. There was only one point upon which his mind could rest with satisfaction:—of that he was sure;—Horse Shoe was certainly at the bottom of the scheme, and was active in his behalf.

The whole of the next day passed over in the same state of uncertainty. It was observed by Butler, with some stress upon the circumstance, that captain St. Jermyn, who had heretofore evinced a disposition to make himself busy in his behalf, had absented himself ever since the trial; and he thus felt himself cut off from the slightest exhibition of sympathy on the part of a single individual in the multitude of fellow beings near him. Indeed, there were various indications of a general personal ill-will against him. The house, in which he was confined, was so constructed that he could frequently hear such expressions, in the conferences of those who inhabited the rooms below stairs, as were uttered above the lower key of conversation,—and these boded him no

good. Once, during the day, colonel Innis visited him. This officer's countenance was severe and indicated anger. His purpose was to extort something from the prisoner in reference to his supposed knowledge of the course of operations of Sumpter, from whose camp Innis did not doubt this letter regarding St. Jermyn had come. He spoke in a short, quick and peremptory tone:—

‘It may be well for you,’—he said—‘that your friends do not too rashly brave my authority. Let me advise you to warn them that others may fall into our hands;—and that if the ensign be not delivered up, there may be a dreadful retaliation.’

‘I know not, sir, of what or whom you speak’—replied Butler;—‘and it is due to my own honour to say, that I will not be induced, for the sake of saving my life, to interfere with any operations which the soldiers of Congress may have undertaken in the cause of the country. In this sentiment, I admonish colonel Innis, that I desire to be ~~put~~ ⁱⁿ possession of no facts from him, that may be communicated ^{under} such an expectation. And having made this determination known to you, I will add to it, that, ~~from~~ the same motives, I will answer no question you can propose to me. You may spare yourself, therefore, the useless labour of this visit. My life is in your hands,—and I have already experienced with what justice and clemency you will use your power when you dare.’

‘A more humble tone’—said Innis with a bitter smile—‘I think would better suit your circumstances.’—And with this remark the commandant haughtily walked out of the apartment.

The next morning whilst Butler was taking his breakfast, which had been brought to him by one of the soldiers of the guard, he heard a loud cheering from the troops that, at that hour, were on parade in the plain.—This was followed by the discharge of a *feu de joie* from the whole line, and a flourish of drums and trumpets.—

‘What is that?’—he inquired eagerly of the soldier, who forgetful, in the excitement of the moment, of the order to restrain his intercourse with the prisoner, answered—

'They have just got the news from Camden:—two days ago Cornwallis defeated Gates and cut his army to pieces. The troops are rejoicing for the victory, and have just had the despatches read.'—

Butler heaved a deep sigh, as he said—'Then all is lost, and liberty is but a name!—I feared it—God knows, I feared it!—'

The soldier was recalled to his duty by the sentinel at the door—and Butler was again left alone.

This was a day of crowding events. The tidings of the battle of Camden gained on the sixteenth, and which had, early this morning, reached Innis, threw a spirit of the highest exultation into the camp. The event was considered decisive of the fate of the rebel power; and the most extravagant anticipations were indulged by the loyalists, in regard to the complete subjugation of the Whigs of the southern provinces. The work of confiscation was to be carried out to the most bitter extreme, and the adherents of the royal government were to grow rich upon the spoils of victory. The soldiers of Innis were permitted to give way to uncontrolled revelry; and, from the first promulgation of the news, this became a day devoted to rejoicings. Innis himself looked upon the victory at Camden with more satisfaction, as it gave him reason to believe that the sentence pronounced against Butler might be executed, without fear of the vengeance threatened against ensign St. Jermyn. He was, however, exceedingly anxious to see this young officer released from the hands of the enemy; and had determined to respect the threat, as long as there was any doubt that it might be performed. The personal consideration of captain St. Jermyn; his station as an officer of importance; and, above all, the great influence of his family, in the esteem of the royal leaders, made it an object of deep concern to Innis to save the ensign, by the most scrupulous regard to his present difficulties. His power to do so seemed to be much increased by the late victory.—

In the afternoon of the same day, further rumours were brought to Innis' camp, importing that Sumpter had been attacked, on that morning, upon the Catawba, by

Tarleton, and completely routed. The prisoners and baggage, taken on the fifteenth, had been regained, and Sumpter was flying with the shattered remnant of his troops towards North Carolina. At the same time an order was brought to Innis to break up his camp and move northward. This only added to the shouts and rejoicings of the troops, and drove them into deeper excesses. The war, they thought, was coming rapidly to an end, and they already anticipated this conclusion, by throwing off the irksomeness of military restraint. The officers were gathered into gossiping and convivial circles; and laughed, in unrestrained feelings of triumph, at the posture of affairs. The private soldiers, on their part, imitated their leaders, and formed themselves into knots and groups, where they caroused over their cups, danced and sang.—All was frolic and merriment.

In the midst of this festivity, a portion of Connelly's troopers, who had now been absent forty-eight hours, arrived, and made an immediate report to Innis. The purport of this was, that they had found ensign St. Jermyn in the possession of a detachment of whig cavalry near the Saluda: as soon as they descried him, which they did, some three hundred paces distant, knowing him by his scarlet uniform, they prepared to attack the party of Whigs; but the ensign perceiving his friends at hand, had already, by a brave effort, disentangled himself from his keepers, and taken off into the open field. The scouts, therefore, instead of attacking the Whigs, directed all their attention to secure the ensign's retreat, by holding themselves ready to check the pursuit: their manœuvre had been successful and the prisoner was free.

‘And is now with you in the camp, my brave fellows?’ said Innis, with great exultation.—

‘Not yet,—replied the sergeant of the squad.—He is upon the road and will, no doubt, soon be here.—We have not seen him since his escape. Whilst we hung back, with a view to favour his retreat, we fell in with a party that we took to be the escort that had made him prisoner,—and as they outnumbered us, we thought it prudent to decline a skirmish with them. So we filed off and made our way back to head quarters. The en-

sign must have been a good mile a-head of us,—and as the road is hard to find, he may have lost his way. But this is certain,—we saw him clear of the Whigs, with his horse's head turned towards this camp.'

'Thank you, good friends,'—said Innis,—'you have performed your duty handsomely.—Go to your comrades:—They have news for you, and an extra allowance to-day. Faith, Ker,—this is a day for settling old accounts,'—he continued, as he turned and addressed an officer by his side.—'Gates beaten,—Sumpter beaten,—and ensign St. Jermyn delivered from captivity!—Huzza, my brave lads,—that looks well! And, now I have another account, which shall be settled on the nail.—Stirring times—captain St. Jermyn.—I congratulate you, my friend, on your brother's safety, and mean to signalize the event as it deserves.—Major Frazer, bring out your prisoner—and let him die the death,—punctually at sun-down:—at sun-down, to the minute, major. We must get that job off our hands. To-morrow, my friends, we shall move towards Catawba, and thence to Hanging Rock. Meantime, we must sweep up our rubbish. So, major, look to your duty!—It might as well have been done at first,'—he added, speaking to himself, as he walked away from the group of officers, to look after other affairs.

The execution of Butler was now regarded as a mere matter of business, and to be despatched as one item of duty, amongst the thousand others that were to be looked after in the hurry of breaking up the post. The interest of the trial had faded away by the lapse of time, and in the more predominating excitements which the absorbing character of the late events had afforded. The preparations for this ceremony were, therefore, attended with no display, and scarcely seemed to arouse inquiry amongst the soldiers of the camp. It was treated in all respects as a subordinate point of police. Ten files were detailed; one drum and fife put in requisition; and this party, attended by Frazer, and two or three officers, who happened to be near at the moment, marched with a careless step to head-quarters.

The first announcement of this sudden resolve was

made to the prisoner by a subaltern; who, without prelude or apology, or the least effort to mitigate the harshness of the order he bore, walked abruptly into the chamber and delivered the message of his superior.—

‘It is a sudden proceeding,’—said Butler, calmly,—‘but your pleasure must be obeyed.’—

‘You have had two days to think of it,’—replied the officer,—‘it is not often so much time is allowed. Ensign St. Jermyn, sir, is safe, and that is all we waited for. We march to-morrow,—and, therefore, have no time to lose.—You are waited for below.’—

Butler stood a moment, with his hand pressed upon his brow—and then muttered

‘It is even so:—our unhappy country is lost, and the reign of blood is but begun. I would ask the poor favour of a moment’s delay, and the privilege of pen, ink and paper, whilst I write but a line to a friend.’—

‘Impossible, sir,’—said the man. ‘Time is precious, and our orders are positive.’—

‘This is like the rest,’—answered Butler,—‘I submit.’—Then buttoning his coat across his breast, he left the room with a firm and composed step.

When he reached the door, the first person that met his eye was captain St. Jermyn. There was an expression of formal gravity in the manner of this officer, as he accosted the prisoner, and lamented the rigour of the fate that awaited him. And it was somewhat with a cold and polite civility, that he communicated his readiness to attend to any request which Butler, in his last moments, might wish to have performed.

Butler thanked him for his solicitude, and then said—‘I asked permission to write to a friend—that has been denied. I feel reluctant to expose myself to another refusal. You have taken a slight interest in my sufferings, and I will, therefore, confide to you a simple wish, which it will not cost my persecutors much to gratify.—It is that I may be taken to my grave, dressed as you see me now. I would not have my person stripped or plundered.’—

‘If you have ~~valuables~~ about you, sir, trust them to

my keeping—I promise you, they shall be faithfully delivered according to your wish.'

'What money there is about my person,'—replied Butler,—'may be given to the soldiers who are compelled to execute this harsh and unjust sentence on my person; but I have a trinket,'—he said, drawing from his bosom a miniature, which was suspended by a ribbon,—'it is of one,'—here, for the first time, a tear started into Butler's eye, and his power of utterance failed him.—

'I understand, sir,'—said St. Jermyn, eagerly reaching out his hand to take the picture,—'I will seek the lady, at whatever hazard'—

'No,'—answered the unfortunate officer,—'it must be buried with me. It has dwelt here,'—he added with emotion, as he placed his hand upon his heart,—'and here it must sleep in death.'—

'On the honour of a soldier,'—said St. Jermyn,—'I promise you its rest shall not be violated.'—

'You will attend me?'

'I will.'—

'Lead on,'—said the prisoner, stepping to the place assigned him in the ranks.—'I seek no further delay.'—

'March down the river, a half a mile below the camp,'—said Innis, who now came up, as the escort had begun its progress towards the place of execution. And the soldiers moved slowly, with the customary funeral observances, in a direction that led across the whole extent of the plain.

When this little detachment had disappeared on the further side of the field, a sudden commotion arose at head-quarters by the hasty arrival of a mounted patrol:

'We are followed!'—cried the leading horseman, in great perturbation.—'They will be here in an instant!—We have been pressed by them for the last two miles.'

'Of whom do you speak?'—inquired Innis, eagerly.

'The enemy!—the enemy!'—vociferated several voices.

At the same moment a cloud of dust was seen rising above the trees, in the direction of the road leading up the Ennoree.

'To arms—to arms!'—ejaculated the commander.—

'Gentlemen, spring to your horses—and sound the alarm through the camp:—we are set upon by Sumpter:—it can be no other.—Curry, take a few dragoons—follow the prisoner; mount him behind one of your men, and retreat with him instantly to Blackstock's!'

Having given these hasty orders, Innis, with the several officers who happened to be at hand, ran to their horses, mounted, and pushed forward to the camp. They had scarcely left their quarters before two dragoons, in advance of a party of some twenty or thirty men, rushed up to the door.

'Search the house,'—shouted the leading soldier.—'Three or four of you, dismount and search the house!—Make sure of major Butler if he is there!—The rest of you, forward with me!'

The delay before headquarters scarcely occupied a moment, and in the meantime the numbers of the assailants were increased by the squadrons that poured in from the rear. These were led by a young officer of great activity and courage, who, seeing the disordered condition of the royalists, waved his sword in the air, as he beckoned his men to follow him in a charge upon the camp.

The advanced party, with the two dragoons, were already on the field charging the first body that they found assembled; and close behind them, followed colonel Williams—the officer of whom I have spoken—with a large division of cavalry. At the same moment that Williams entered upon the plain from this quarter, a second and third corps, led respectively by Shelby and Clarke, were seen galloping upon the two flanks of the encampment.

The plain was now occupied by about two hundred whig cavalry. The royalists, taken by surprise,—over their cups, it may be said, and in the midst of a riotous festival, were every where thrown into the wildest confusion. Such of them as succeeded in gaining their arms, took post behind the trees, and kept up an irregular fire upon the assailants. Colonel Innis had succeeded in getting together about a hundred men at a remote corner of his camp, and had now formed them into a solid column to resist the attack of the

cavalry, whilst from this body he poured forth a few desultory volleys of musketry, hoping to gain time to collect the scattered forces that were in various points endeavouring to find their proper station. Horse Shoe Robinson and John Ramsay—the two foremost in the advance—were to be discovered pushing through the sundered groups of the enemy, with a restless and desperate valour, that nothing could withstand.

‘Cut them down,’—cried Horse Shoe,—‘without mercy!—remember the Waxhaws!’—And he accompanied his exhortation with the most vehement and decisive action,—striking down, with a huge sabre, all who opposed his way.

Meantime, colonel Williams and his comrades charged the column formed by Innis, and, in a few moments, succeeded in riding through the array, and compelling them into a total rout. Robinson and Ramsay, side by side, mingled in this charge, and were seen in the thickest of the fight. Innis, finding all efforts to maintain his ground ineffectual, turned his horse towards Musgrave’s mill, and fled as fast as spur and sword could urge the animal forward. The sergeant, however, had marked him for his prize, and following, as fleetly as the trusty Captain Peter was able to carry him, soon came up with the fugitive officer,—and with one broad sweep of his sword dislodged him from his saddle, and left him bleeding on the ground. Turning again towards the field, his quick eye discerned the unwieldy bulk of Hugh Habershaw. The gross captain had, in the hurry of the assault, been unable to reach his horse; and, in the first moments of danger, had taken refuge in one of the little sheds which had been constructed for the accommodation of the soldiers. As the battle waxed hot in the neighbourhood of his retreat, he had crept forth from his den, and was making the best of his way to an adjoining cornfield. He was bare-headed,—and his bald crown, as the slanting rays of the evening sun fell upon it, glistened like a gilded globe. The well-known figure no sooner occurred to the sergeant’s view, than he rode off in pursuit. The cornfield was bounded by a fence, and the burly braggart had just succeeded in reaching it when his enemy overtook him.

'Have mercy, good Mr. Horse Shoe, have mercy on a defenceless man!'—screamed the runaway, in a voice discordant with terror, as he stopped at the fence, which he was unable to mount, and looked back upon his pursuer.—'Remember the good-will I showed you when you was a prisoner!—Quarter, quarter—for God's sake, quarter!'

'You get no quarter from me—you cursed blood-lapper!'—exclaimed Horse Shoe, excited to a rage that seldom visited his breast;—'think of Grindall's Ford!'—and at the same instant he struck a heavy, downward blow, with such sheer descent, that it clove the skull of the perfidious freebooter clean through to the spine.—'I have sworn your death,'—said the sergeant,—'even if I catch you asleep in your bed:—and right fairly have you earned it.'

The body fell into a bed of mire which had been the resort of the neighbouring swine:—and leaving it in this foul plight, Horse Shoe hastened back to rejoin his comrades.

The battle now ended in the complete rout of the enemy. Williams' first care, after the day was won, was to collect his men, and to secure his prisoners. Many of the Tories had escaped: many were killed and wounded;—but of Butler, no tidings could be gained: he had disappeared from the field before the fight began, and all the information that the prisoners could give was, that orders had been sent to remove him from the neighbourhood. Colonel Innis was badly wounded, and in no condition to speak with his conquerors: he was sent, with several other disabled officers, to head-quarters. Captain St. Jermyn had fled with most of those who had mounted their horses before the arrival of Williams.

The day was already at its close, and order was taken to spend the night upon the field. Guards were posted, and every precaution adopted to avoid a surprise in turn from the enemy, who, it was feared, might soon rally a strong party and assail the conquerors.

The disturbed condition of the country, and the almost unanimous sentiment of the people against the Whigs, now strengthened by the late victories, prevented Wil-

liams from improving his present advantage, or even from bearing off his prisoners. Robinson and Ramsay both volunteered to head a party to scour the country in quest of Butler, but the commanding officer could give no encouragement to the enterprise: it was, in his judgment, a hopeless endeavour, when the forces of the enemy were every where so strong. His determination, therefore, was to retreat, as soon as his men were in condition, back to his fastnesses. His few killed were buried: the wounded, of which there were not more than fifteen or twenty, were taken care of; and the jaded troops were dismissed, to seek refreshment amongst the abundant stores captured from the enemy. Ensign St. Jermyn was still a prisoner; and, for the sake of adding to Butler's security, Williams selected two or three other officers that had fallen into his hands to accompany him in his retreat. These arrangements all being made, the colonel and his officers retired to repose. The next morning at day-light there were no traces of the Whigs to be seen upon the plain. It was abandoned to the loyalist prisoners and their wounded comrades.

CHAPTER IV.

WILLIAMS TAKES A FANCY TO A FOREST LIFE.—HORSE SHOE AND JOHN RAMSAY CONTINUE ACTIVE IN THE SERVICE OF BUTLER.—MARY MUSGROVE BECOMES A VALUABLE AUXILIARY.

WILLIAMS had commenced his retreat before the dawn, as much with a view to accomplish a large portion of his journey before the heat of the day, as to protect himself against the probable pursuit of the rallied forces of the enemy. His destination was towards the mountains on the north-western frontier. The overthrow of Gates had left a large force of Tory militia at the disposal of Cornwallis who, it was conjectured, would use them to break up every remnant of opposition in this region. It was, therefore, a matter of great importance to Williams to

conduct his little force into some place of security against the attack of the royalists.

Colonel Elijah Clarke had ever since the fall of Charleston, been employed in keeping together the few scattered whig families, in that part of Carolina lying contiguous to the Savannah, with a view to an organized plan of resistance against the British authorities; and he had so far accomplished his purpose, as to have procured some three or four hundred men who had agreed to hold themselves in readiness to strike a blow whenever the occasion offered. These men were to be mustered, at any moment, by a preconcerted signal; and, in the meantime, they were instructed, by confining themselves to their dwellings, or pursuing their ordinary occupations, to keep as much as possible out of the way of the dominant authorities.

Clarke resided in Georgia, whence he had fled, as soon as the royalist leader, Brown, had taken possession of Augusta; and we have already seen that a letter from colonel Pinckney at Charleston, which Horse Shoe Robinson had been entrusted to deliver, had summoned Arthur Butler to this frontier to aid in Clarke's enterprise.

Colonel Isaac Shelby, a resident of Washington county in Virginia, until the settlement of the southern line of that state had left him in the district, at present known as Sullivan county in Tennessee—had been an efficient auxiliary in Clarke's scheme, and was now ready to summon a respectable number of followers for the support of the war on the mountain border. He and Clarke had accidentally arrived at Williams' camp, a day or two before the attack upon Innis, with a view to a consultation as to the general interests of the meditated campaign; and they had only tarried to take a part in that engagement, from a natural concern for the fate of their intended comrade Butler. Having no further motive for remaining with Williams, they were both intent upon returning to their respective duties, and accordingly, during the retreat of the following day, they took their leaves.

The vigilance with which these partisans were watch-

ed by their enemies, almost forbade the present hope of successful combination. From a consciousness of the hazard of attempting to concentrate their forces at this juncture, they had determined still to pursue their separate schemes of annoyance, until a more favourable moment for joint action should arise; and in the interval to hide themselves as much as possible in the forest.—It was, consequently, in the hope of preserving his independence, at least,—if not of aiding Clarke,—that Williams now moved with so much despatch to the mountains.

His course lay towards the head waters of the Fair Forest river, in the present region of Spartanburg. This district was inhabited only by a few hunters, and some scattered Indians of an inoffensive character; it abounded in game and promised to afford an easy subsistence to men whose habits were simple, and who were accustomed to rely upon the chase for support. The second day brought our hardy soldiers into the sojourn they sought. It was a wilderness, broken by mountains, and intersected by streams of surpassing transparency; whilst its elevated position and southern latitude, conferred upon it a climate that was then, as well as now, remarked for its delicious temperature in summer, and its exemption from the rigours of winter.

The spot at which Williams rested was a sequestered valley, deep hid in the original woods, and watered by the Fair Forest, whose stream, so near its fountain, scarcely exceeded the dimensions of a little brook. Here he determined to form a camp, to which in times of emergency he might safely retreat. With a view to render it easy of access as a rendezvous, he caused land-marks to be made, by cutting notches on the trees,—or *blazing* them, in the woodman's phrase—in several directions leading towards the principal highways that penetrated the country. The retreat thus established is familiar to the history of the war, under the name of the Fair Forest camp.

These arrangements being completed in the course of the first day after his arrival, Williams now applied himself to the adoption of measures for the safety of Arthur

Butler. Amongst the spoils that had fallen into his hands, after the victory over Innis, was the document containing the proceedings of the court martial. The perusal of this paper, together with the comments afforded by Robinson, convinced him of the malignity of the persecution which had aimed at the life of the prisoner. It occurred to him, therefore, to submit the whole proceeding to Lord Cornwallis, to whom, he was persuaded, it either had been misrepresented,—or, most probably, was entirely unknown. He did not doubt that an appeal to the honourable feelings of that officer, with a full disclosure of the facts, would instantly be followed by an order that should put Butler under the protection of the rules of war, and ensure him all the rights that belong to a mere prisoner taken in arms in a lawful quarrel. A spirited remonstrance was accordingly prepared to this effect. It detailed the circumstances of Butler's case, which was accompanied with a copy of the proceedings of the court, and it concluded with a demand that such measures should be adopted by the head of the army, as comported with the rights of humanity, and the laws of war,—‘a course,’ the writer suggested,—‘that he did not hesitate to believe his lordship would feel belonged both to the honour and duty of his station.’ This paper was consigned to the care of an officer, who was directed to proceed with it, under a flag of truce, to the head-quarters of the British commander.

Soon after this, Robinson apprised Williams that Ramsay and himself had determined to venture back towards the Ennoree, to learn something of the state of affairs in that quarter, and to apply themselves more immediately to the service of Butler. In aid of this design, the sergeant obtained a letter from Williams, the purport of which was to inform the commandant of any post of the loyalists whom it might concern, that an application had been made on Butler's behalf to Cornwallis, and that the severest retaliation would be exercised upon the prisoners in Williams' custody, for any violence that might be offered to the American officer.—Putting this letter in his pocket, our man of ‘mickle might,’ attended by his good and faithful ally, John Ramsay, took his leave of ‘The

Fair Forest,' towards noon of the fourth day after the battle near Musgrove's mill.

The second morning after their departure, the two companions had reached the Ennoree, not far from the habitation of David Ramsay. It was fair summer weather, and nature was as gay, as in that piping time before the blast of war had blown across her fields. All things, in the course of a few days, seemed to have undergone a sudden change. The country presented no signs of strife: no bands of armed men molested the highways. An occasional husbandman was seen at his plough:—the deer sprang up from the brush wood, and fled into the forest, as if inviting again the pastime of the chace; and even when the two soldiers encountered a chance wayfarer upon the road, each party passed the other unquestioned:—there was all the seeming quiet of a pacified country. The truth was, the war had rolled northward—and all behind it had submitted since the disastrous fight at Camden. The lusty and hot-brained portions of the population were away with the army, and the non-combatants only, or those wearied with arms, were all that were to be seen in this region.

Horse Shoe, after riding a long time in silence, as these images of tranquillity occupied his thoughts, made a simple remark that spoke a volume of truth in a few homely words.

‘This is an unnatural sort of stillness, John. Men may call this peace, but I call it fear. If there is a poor wretch of a Whig in this district, it's as good as his life is worth to own himself. How far off, mought we be from your father's?’

The young trooper heaved a deep sigh.—‘I knew you were thinking of my poor father, when you spoke your thoughts, Horse Shoe. This is a heavy day for him.—But he could bear it:—he's a man who thinks little of hardships.—There are the helpless women, Galbraith Robinson,’—he continued, as he shook his head with an expression of sorrow that almost broke into tears.—‘Getting near home one thinks of them first. My good and kind mother—God knows how she would bear any heavy accident.—I am always afraid to ask questions, in

these times, about the family—for fear of hearing something bad. And there's little Mary Musgrove over at the mill!—

‘You have good right to be proud of that girl, John Ramsay,’—interrupted Robinson.—‘So speak out, man, and none of your stammering.—Hoot!—she told me she was your sweet-heart!—You havn’t half the tongue of that wench. Why, sir, if I was a loveable man, haw, haw!—which I’m not—I’ll be cursed if I wouldn’t spark that little fusee myself.’

‘This fence,’—said Ramsay, unheeding the sergeant’s banter,—‘belongs to our farm, and, perhaps, we had better let down the rails and approach the house across this field;—if the Tories should be there we might find the road dangerous. This gives us a chance of retreat.’

‘That’s both scrupulous and wise, John,’—replied the sergeant.—‘So down with the pannel: we will steal upon the good folks, if they are at home and take them by surprise. But, mind you, my lad,—see that your pistols are primed;—we mought onawares get into a wasp’s nest.’

The fence was lowered and the horsemen cautiously entered the field. After passing a narrow dell and rising to the crest of the opposite hill, they obtained a position but a short distance in the rear of the homestead. From this point a melancholy prospect broke upon their sight. The dwelling house had disappeared, and in its place was a heap only of smouldering ashes. A few of the upright frame-posts, scorched black, and a stone chimney with its ample fire-place were all that remained of what, but a few days before, was the happy abode of the family of a brave and worthy man.

‘My God! my thoughts were running upon this!—I feared their spite would break, at last, upon my father’s head,’—cried John Ramsay, as he put spurs to his horse and galloped up to the ruins:—‘the savages have done their worst.—But my father and mother, where are they?’—he exclaimed, as the tears rolled down his cheeks.

‘Take heart, my brave boy!’—said, Robinson in the kindest tones.—‘There’s a reckoning to come for all these villainies—and it will go hard with many a Tory before this account is settled.’

'I will carry a hot hand into the first house that covers a tory head,'—replied the young trooper, passionately,—'this burning shall be paid with ten like it.'

'All in good time, John,'—said Robinson coolly.—'As for the burning, it is no great matter;—a few good neighbours would soon set that to rights, by building your father a better house than the one he has lost. Besides, Congress will not forget a true friend, when the war is well fought out. But it does go against my grain, John Ramsay, to see a parcel of cowardly runaways spitting their malice against women and children. The barn, likewise, I see is gone,'—continued the sergeant, looking towards another pile of ruins, a short distance off.—'The villains!—when there's foul work to be done, they don't go at it like apprentices. No matter—I have made one observation—the darkest hour is just before the day—and that's a comfortable old saying.'

By degrees John Ramsay fell into a calmer temper, and now began to cast about as to the course fit to be pursued in their present emergency. About a quarter of a mile distant, two or three negro cabins were visible, and he could descry a few children near the doors. With an eager haste, therefore, he and the sergeant shaped their course across the field to this spot. When they arrived within fifty paces of the nearest hovel, the door was set ajar, and a rifle, thrust through the aperture, was aimed at the visitors.

'Stand for your lives!'—shouted the well known voice of David Ramsay. In the next instant the door was thrown wide open, the weapon cast aside, and the father rushed forward as he exclaimed.—'Gracious God, my boy, and Horse Shoe Robinson!—Welcome lads;—a hundred times more welcome, than when I had better shelter to give you! But the good friends of King George, you see, have been so kind as to give me a call. It is easy to tell when they take it into their heads to notice a Whig.'

'My mother!'—exclaimed John Ramsay—

'In, and see her, boy—she wants comfort from you. But, thank God!—she bears this blow better than I thought she could.'

Before this speech was uttered John had disappeared.

‘And how came this mishap to fall upon you, David?’—inquired Horse Shoe.

‘I suppose some of your prisoners,’—replied Ramsay—‘must have informed upon Andy and me: for in the retreat of Innis’s runaways, a party came through my farm. They staid only long enough to ransack the house, and to steal whatever was worth taking,—and then to set fire to the dwelling and all the out-buildings.—Both Andy and myself, by good luck, perhaps, were absent,—or they would have made us prisoners: so they turned my wife and children out of doors to shift for themselves—and scampered off as fast as if Williams was still at their heels. All that was left for us, was to crowd into this cabin, where, considering all things, we are not so badly off. But things are taking an ill turn for the country, Horse Shoe. We are beaten on all sides.’

‘Not so bad, David, as to be past righting yet.’—replied the sergeant. ‘What have they done with major Butler?’

‘He was carried, as I learned, up to Blackstock’s, the evening of the fight—and yesterday it was reported that a party has taken him back to Musgrove’s. I believe he is now kept close prisoner in Allen’s house. Christopher Shaw was here two days since, and told us that orders had come to occupy the miller’s dwelling house for that purpose.’

Horse Shoe had now entered the cabin with David Ramsay, and in the course of the hour that followed, during which the family had prepared refreshment for the travellers, the sergeant had fully canvassed all the particulars necessary to be known for his future guidance. It was determined that he and John should remain in their present concealment until night, and then endeavour to reach the mill, under cover of the darkness, and open some means of communication with the family of the miller.

The rest of the day was spent in anxious thought. The situation of the adventurers was one of great personal peril, as they were now immediately within the circle of operations of the enemy, and likely to be observed and challenged the first moment they ventured upon the road.

The hour of dusk had scarcely arrived before they were again mounted on horseback. They proceeded cautiously upon the road that led through the wood, until it intersected the highway; and, having attained this point, John Ramsay, who was well acquainted with every avenue through the country, now led the way, by a private and scarcely discernible path, into the adjacent forest,—and thence, by a tedious and prolonged route, directed his companion to the banks of the Ennoree. This course of travel took them immediately to the plain on which Innis had been encamped—the late field of battle. All here was still and desolate. The sheds and other vestiges of the recent bivouac were yet visible,—but not even the farm house that had constituted Innis's head quarters was reoccupied by its original inhabitants. The bat whirred over the plain, and the owl hooted from the neighbouring trees. The air still bore the scent of dead bodies which had either been left exposed, or so meagerly covered with earth as to taint the breeze with noisome exhalations.

‘There is a great difference, John,’—said Horse Shoe, who seldom let an occasion to moralize, after his own fashion, slip by,—‘there's a great difference betwixt a hot field and a stale one. Your hot field makes a soldier,—for there's a sort of a stir in it that sets the blood to running merrily through a man—and that's what I call pleasure. But when every thing is festering like the inside of a hospital, or what's next door to it, a grave yard,—it is mighty apt to turn a dragoon's stomach and make a preacher of him. This here dew falls to-night like frost, and chills me to the heart,—which it wouldn't do, if it didn't freshen up the smell of dead men. And there is the hogs, busy as so many sextons amongst Innis's Tories:—you may hear them grunt over their suppers.—Well, there is one man among them, that I'll make bold to say these swine havn't got the stomach to touch—that's Hugh Habershaw:—he sleeps in the mud in yonder fence-corner.’

‘If you had done nothing else in the fight, Horse Shoe, but cleave that fellow's skull,’—said Ramsay,—‘the ride

'we took would have been well paid for—it was worth the trouble.'

'And the rascallionly fellow to think,'—added Horse Shoe,—'that I was a going to save him from the devil's clutches, when I had a broadsword in my hand, and his bald, greasy pate in reach. His brain had nothing in it but deceit and lies, and all sorts of cruel thoughts,—enough to poison the air when I let them out.—I have made an observation, John, all my life on them foul-mouthed, swilling braggars—that when there's so much cunning and blood-thirstiness, there's no room for a thimble-full of courage:—their heart's in their belly,—which is as much as to signify, that the man's a most beastly coward.—But now, it is my opinion, that we had best choose a spot along upon the river here, and leave our horses. I think we can manœuvre better on foot: the miller's house is short of two miles, and we mought be noticed if we were to go nearer on horseback.'

This proposal was adopted, and the two friends when they had ridden a short distance below the battle ground, halted in a thicket, where they fastened their horses, and proceeded towards the mill on foot. After following the course of the stream for near half an hour, they perceived, at a distance, a light glimmering through the window of Allen Musgrove's dwelling. This induced a second pause in their march, when Ramsay suggested the propriety of his advancing alone to reconnoitre the house, and attempting to gain some speech with the inmates.—He accordingly left the sergeant to amuse himself with his own thoughts.

Horse Shoe took his seat beneath a sycamore, where he waited a long time in anxious expectation of the return of his comrade. Growing uneasy, at last, at John's delay, he arose, and stole cautiously forward until he reached the mill, where he posted himself in a position from which he was able to see and hear what was going on at the miller's house. The porch was occupied by three or four persons, whose conversation, as it came to the sergeant's ear, proved them to be strangers to the family; and a ray of light from a taper within, after a

while, made this more manifest, by revealing the scarlet uniform of the enemy. Horse Shoe was thus confirmed in the truth of the report, that Butler had been brought to this place under a military escort. With this conviction he returned to the sycamore, where he again sat down to wait for the coming of his companion.

It was after ten o'clock, and the sergeant was casting over in his thoughts the long absence of John, when his attention was aroused by the sound of footsteps,—and the next instant John Ramsay and Mary Musgrave stood beside him.

‘In the name of wonder, John,—what kept you till this time of night?’—was the sergeant’s accost.—

‘Softly, man,—I have news for you,’—replied Ramsay.—‘Here is Mary herself?’—

‘And so she is, indeed?’—exclaimed the sergeant, at the same time shaking her hand,—‘this is my petticoat-sodger,—how goes it with you, girl?’—

‘I have only a moment to spare,’—replied the maiden cheerfully,—‘and it is the greatest of good luck that I thought of coming out;—for John gave me a signal—which I was stupid enough not to understand at first. But, after a while, I thought it could be no one but John Ramsay;—and that, partly, because I expected he would be coming into the neighbourhood, ever since I heard of his being at his father’s, after the ensign was made a prisoner.’—

‘I went,’—said John Ramsay,—‘to the further side of the house, where I set to whistling an old-fashioned tune that Mary was acquainted with—walking away all the time in an opposite direction—as if there was nothing meant’—

‘And I knew the tune, Mr. Horse Shoe,’—interrupted Mary, eagerly—it was Maggie Lauder.—John practised that trick once before to show me how to find my way to him. Upon that, I made an excuse to leave the room, and slipped out through the garden—and then I followed the whistling, as folks say they follow a jack o’ lantern.’

‘And so, by a countermarch,’—continued the young dragoon,—‘we came round the meadow and through the woods, here.’—

'Now, that you've got here, at last,'—said Horse Shoe, 'tell me the news.'—

'Major Butler is in the house,'—said Mary and John, both speaking at once.—'He was brought there yesterday from Blackstock's,'—continued the maiden.—'Orders came from somebody that he was to be kept at our house, until they had fixed upon what was to be done with him. Colonel Innis was too ill to think of such matters, and has been carried out of the neighbourhood—and, it is thought, he will die.'

'How many men are there to guard the prisoner?'—asked the sergeant.—

'There are more than twenty, with a lieutenant, from Ninety-Six, who has the charge of them.'

'And how does the major bear his troubles?'—

'He seems to be heavy at heart'—replied the maiden:—'But that may be because he is away from his friends.—Though my father, who is a good judge of such things, says he suffers tribulation like a christian.—He asked me privately, if I had heard any thing of you, Mr. Robinson: and when I told him what folks said about your being with the people that beat colonel Innis, he smiled, and said if any man could get him free, it was Horse Shoe Robinson.'

'Do they allow you to see him often?'—inquired the sergeant.—

'I have seen him only two or three times since he came to the house,'—answered the maiden.—'But the officer that has charge of him is not contrary nor ill-natured, and makes no objection to my carrying him his meals—though I am obliged to pretend to know less about major Butler than I do, for fear they might be jealous of my talking to him.'

'You can give him a letter?'—

'I think I can contrive it'—replied the maiden.

'Then give him this, my good girl,'—said Robinson, taking Williams' letter from his pocket and putting it in Mary's hand. 'It is a piece of writing that he can use whenever he is much pressed. It may save him from harm. Now, I want you to do something more. You must find a chance just to whisper in his ear, that Horse

Shoe Robinson and John Ramsay are in the neighbourhood. Tell him, likewise, that colonel Williams has sent a messenger to Lord Cornwallis to lay his case before that officer, and to get some order for his better treatment. That the doings of that rascally court martial have been sent by the messenger, hoping that Lord Cornwallis, if he is a brave and a christian man—as they say he is—will stop this onmerciful persecution of the major—which has no cause for it under heaven.—Will you remember all this?—

‘I’ll try, sir’—responded Mary—‘and besides I will tell it to my father, who has more chance of speaking to major Butler than I have.’

‘Now,’—said Horse Shoe—‘we will be here again to-morrow night, a little earlier than this.—you must meet us here. And say to the major, if he has any message for us, he may send it by you:—but, be cautious, Mary, how you are seen talking with the prisoner. If they suspect you, it will spoil all.’

‘Trust to me’—said the girl—I warrant I have learned by this time how to behave myself amongst these red coats.’

‘There, John’—continued Horse Shoe—I have said all I want to say—and as you, I make no doubt, have got a good deal to tell the girl—it is but fair that you should have your chance. So, do you walk back with her as far as the mill, and I’ll wait here for you. But don’t forget yourself by overstaying your furlough.’

‘I must get home, as fast as possible,’—said Mary—‘They will be looking for me.’

‘Away, John Ramsay—away,’—added Horse Shoe—‘and have your eyes about you, man.’

With this command, John Ramsay and the miller’s daughter hastily withdrew, and were soon out of the sergeant’s hearing.

After an interval, which doubtless seemed short to the gallant dragoon, he returned to his comrade; and the two set out rapidly in quest of their horses; and once more having got into their saddles, they retraced their steps, at a brisk speed, to Ramsay’s cabin.

CHAPTER V.

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout and the groan and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour come loading the gale.

The Maid of Toro.

In the confusion that ensued upon the defeat of Innis, James Curry succeeded in conducting Butler from the field. His orders were to retreat with the prisoner to Blackstock's; and he had accordingly set out with about a dozen troopers, by a private path that led towards a quarter secure from the molestation of the enemy, when the attack commenced. Butler was mounted behind one of the men, and, in this uneasy condition, was borne along the circuitous by-way that had been chosen, without a moment's respite from the severe motion of the horse, nearly at high speed; until, having accomplished nearly three miles of the retreat, the party arrived at the main road that extended between Innis's camp and Blackstock's. Here, Curry conceiving himself to be out of danger of pursuit, halted his men, with a purpose to remain until he could learn something of the fate of the combat. Butler was in a state of the most exciting bewilderment as to the cause of this sudden change in his affairs. No explanation was given to him by his conductors; and although, from the first, he was aware that an extraordinary emergency had arisen from some assault upon Innis's position, no one dropped a word in his hearing, to give him the slightest clue to the nature of the attack. The troopers about him preserved a morose and ill-natured silence, and even manifested towards him a harsh and resentful demeanour. He heard the firing; but what troops were engaged, by whom led, or with what chances of success, were subjects of the most painfully interesting doubt. He could only conjecture that this was a surprise accomplished by the Whigs, and that the assailants must have come in sufficient force to justify the boldness of the enterprise. That Horse Shoe was connected with this irruption, he felt fully assured; and, from this circumstance, he gathered the consolatory

and cheerful prognostic of a better issue out of his afflictions, than, in his late condition, seemed even remotely possible. This hope grew brighter as the din of battle brought the tidings of the day to his ear. The first few scattered shot, that told of the confusion in which the combat was begun, were, after an interval, succeeded by regular volleys of musketry that indicated an orderly and marshalled resistance. Platoon after platoon fired in regular succession,—signifying, to the practised hearing of the soldier, that infantry were receiving the attacks of cavalry, and that as yet the first had not faltered. Then, the firing grew more slack; and random shots were discharged from various quarters;—but amidst these were heard no embodied volleys. It was the casual and nearly overpowered resistance of flying men.

At this juncture there was a dark frown on the brow of Curry, as he looked at his comrades, and said, in a low and muttered tone,—‘that helter-skelter shot grates curstly on the ear.—There’s ill luck in the sound of it.’

Presently, a few stragglers appeared at a turn of the road, some quarter of a mile in the direction of the battle, urging their horses forward at the top of their speed. These were followed by groups both of infantry and cavalry, pressing onward in the utmost disorder—those on horseback thrusting their way through the throng of foot-soldiers, seemingly regardless of life or limb;—the wounded with their wounds bleeding afresh, or hastily bandaged with such appliances as were at hand. All hurried along amidst the oaths, remonstrances and unheeded orders of the officers, who were endeavouring to resume their commands:—it was the flight of men beset by a panic, and fearful of pursuit; and the clouds of dust raised by the press and hurry of this career almost obscured the setting sun.

During the first moments of uncertainty, Curry, no less anxiously than Butler, remained stationary by the roadside,—reading the distant signs of the progress of the fight: but now, when the disastrous issue was no longer doubtful, he commanded his cavalcade to move forward; and, from that moment, prosecuted his journey with unabated speed until he arrived at Blackstock’s.

Butler was unceremoniously marched to his former place of confinement in the barn, where a rigorous guard was set over his person. In the confusion and insubordination that prevailed amongst the crowd, that, during the night, was continually increasing in the little hamlet, the common rites of humanity towards the prisoner were forgotten, and he was left to pass the weary hours till morning, on a shock of hay, without food or other refreshment, than a simple draught of water. From the unreserved murmurs of those who frequented the place, and the querulous upbraiding of the soldiery against each other, Butler was enabled to glean the principal incidents of the day. The supposed death of Innis reached him through this channel, and, what was scarcely a subject of less personal interest to him, the certain end of Hugh Habershaw. It was with a silent satisfaction at the moral or *poetical* justice—as it has been called—of the event, that he heard the comrades of the late self-conceited captain describe his death in terms of coarse and unpitying ribaldry,—a retribution due to the memory of a cruel and cowardly braggart.

When the morning was fully abroad, the disarranged and broken remnants of the Tory camp, began gradually to be reduced to a state of discipline. The day was spent in this occupation. Orders were every moment arriving from the higher officers of the late camp, or from the nearest British posts. Videttes bore the tidings of the different military operations from the neighbourhood of the enemy. The fragments of companies were marshalled into squads and subdivisions; and, successively, one party after another was seen to leave the hamlet, and take a direction of march that led towards the main British army, or to the garrisons of the lower districts.

Towards the close of the day one detachment only was left; and Butler was given to understand that this was entrusted with his especial keeping. It was composed of a few regular soldiers of the garrison of Ninety-Six, and a small number of the country militia,—making, in all, about twenty men, commanded by lieutenant Macdonald of the regular army.

Butler remained in his present state of seclusion four

or five days, during which he experienced much mitigation of the rigours of his captivity. Macdonald was a careful and considerate soldier, and demeaned himself towards his prisoner with as much kindness as the nature of his trust allowed. He removed him into a comfortable apartment in the dwelling house, and supplied him with such conveniences as his situation required: he even made him occasional visits, which were attended with more than the mere observances of courtesy and respect, and expressed a sympathy in his sufferings.

These unexpected tones of comfort, from a quarter in which Butler had hitherto heard nothing but fierce hatred and harsh rebuke, fell gratefully upon his ear, and gave a brighter colour to his hopes for the future. But he could not help observing, that no hint was dropped by Macdonald, which might furnish him the slightest ground of surmise as to the vicissitudes that yet awaited him. The reported fall of Innis seemed to afford a natural foundation for the belief, that the malice of his enemies might hereafter be less active,—as he attributed much of the persecution he had suffered to the secret machinations of that individual. He no longer saw around his person those agents who first pursued him with such bitter hostility. He seemed to have fallen into entirely new combinations, and had reason to augur, from all he saw, that their purposes against him were less wicked. And first, above all other topics of consolation and comfort, was the conviction that a brave and efficient party of friends were in the field, intent upon his liberation. Still, his situation was one in which it required all his manhood to sustain himself. A young soldier of an ardent temper and zealously bent upon active and perilous service, can ill brook the tedious, dull delays of captivity, even in its mildest form: but if this thraldom beset in a period of universal agitation, when ‘great events are on the gale,’ of which the captive is only a witness to the pervading interest they excite, without being permitted to know their import; if, moreover, as in the case of Butler, an impenetrable veil of mystery hang over the purpose of his captivity, behind which the few short glimpses afforded him, open upon his view nothing but death in its most

frightful forms; and if to these are added, by far the bitterest of its qualities, the anxieties, cares and pains of a devoted, plighted lover, separated from the heart that loves him,—we may well conjecture that the most gallant spirit may find in it, even amidst occasional gleams of sunshine, that sinking of hope which the philosophic king of Israel has described as making ‘the heart sick,’—that chafing of the soul that, like the encaged eaglet wearies and tears its wing against the bars of its prison. Even so fared it with Arthur Butler, who now found himself growing more and more into the shadow of a melancholy temper.

It was soon ascertained that Williams had abandoned the field he had won, and had retreated beyond the reach of immediate pursuit. And as the post at Musgrove’s mill afforded many advantages, in reference to the means of communicating with the garrisons of the middle section of the province, and was more secure against the hazard of molestation from such parties of Whigs as might still be out-lying, an order was sent to Macdonald to remove with his prisoner to the habitation of the miller, and there to detain him until some final step should be taken in his case.

In pursuance of this requisition, Butler was conducted, after the interval of the few days we have mentioned, to Allen Musgrove’s. The old man received his guest with that submission to the domination of the military masters of the province, which he had prescribed to himself throughout the contest,—secretly rejoicing that the selection made of his house for this purpose, might put it in his power to alleviate the sufferings of a soldier, towards whose cause he felt a decided though unavowed attachment. This selection furnished evidence to the miller, that nothing had transpired to arouse the distrust of the British authorities in the loyalty of any part of his family,—and to Butler, it inferred the consolatory fact, that the zealous devotion of Mary Musgrove to his service had, as yet, passed without notice; whilst, to the maiden herself, it was proof that her agency in the delivery of the letter, which she had so adroitly put within the reach of the

officers of the court, had not even excited a suspicion against her.

The best room in the house was allotted to the prisoner; and the most sedulous attention on the part of the family, so far as it could be administered without inducing mistrust, was employed in supplying him with whatever was needful to his condition. On the part of the commanding officer, the usual precautions known to military experience for the safe keeping of a prisoner were adopted. The privates of the guard occupied the barn, whilst Macdonald and one or two subordinate officers took up their quarters in the dwelling house: sentinels were posted at the several avenues leading to the habitation, and a sergeant had the especial care of the prisoner, who, under this supervision, was occasionally allowed the range of the garden. The usual forms of a camp police were observed, with scrupulous exactness;—and the morning and the nightly drum, the parade, the changing of sentries, the ringing of ramrods in the empty barrels of the muskets, and the glitter of weapons, were strangely and curiously associated with the rural and unwarlike features of the scenery around.

CHAPTER VI.

BUTLER FINDS A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE IN HIS DISTRESS.

ALLEN MUSGROVE had heard enough of Butler's history from his daughter and from Galbraith Robinson, to feel a warm interest in that officer's safety; and now his personal acquaintance with the prisoner still further corroborated his first prepossessions. The old man took the earliest opportunity to indicate to Butler the concern he felt in his welfare.—From the moderate and kindly tone of his own character, he was enabled to do this without drawing upon himself the distrust of the officer of the guard. His expressions of sympathy were regarded, by Macdonald, as the natural sentiments of a religious mind imbued with an habitual compassion for the sufferings of

a fellow creature, and of one who strove to discharge the duties of a peace-maker. His visits were looked upon as those of a spiritual counsellor, whose peculiar right it was to administer consolation to the afflicted, in whatever condition; he was therefore permitted freely to commune with the prisoner,—and, as it sometimes happened, alone with him in his chamber.

This privilege was now particularly useful;—for Mary having, on the morning after her midnight interview with John Ramsay and Robinson, communicated to her father the incidents of that meeting, and put in his possession the letter which the sergeant had given her,—and having also repeated her message to him accurately as she had received it,—Musgrove took occasion, during the following day, to deliver the letter to Butler, and to make known to him all that he had heard from his daughter. This disclosure produced the most cheering effect upon Butler's spirits. It, for the first time, since the commencement of his sufferings, opened to his mind a distinct view of his chance of eventual liberation. The expectation of having his case represented to Cornwallis, inspired him with a strong confidence that justice would be done to him, and the covert malice of his enemies be disarmed. In this hope, it occurred to him to take some instant measures to satisfy the British commander-in-chief of the groundless character of the principal accusation brought against him by the court martial,—that which related to the pretended design to deliver up Philip Lindsay to the wrath of the republican government. For this purpose he resolved to make an appeal to Lindsay himself, by letter,—and frankly to call upon him to put at rest this most unjust and wicked accusation. He knew that however strong Lindsay's antipathy to him might be, the high sense of honour which distinguished the father of Mildred, might be confidently and successfully invoked to furnish such a statement, as should entirely satisfy his accusers of the gross injustice of the charge.—‘I will write to him,’—he said,—‘and throw myself upon his protection. I will require of him to detail the whole history of my intercourse with his family, and to say how improbable even he must deem it, that I could be so

base as to plot against his peace. And I will appeal to Mildred to fortify her father's statement, to show that this wicked accusation rests upon a story which it is impossible could be true.'

Whilst Butler's thoughts were still occupied with this resolve, Mary Musgrove entered his apartment, bearing in her hands a napkin and plate which she had come to spread for his dinner; and as the maiden employed herself in arranging a small table in the middle of the room, she cast a few distrustful glances towards the sentinel who paced to and fro opposite the door, and then, seizing on a moment when the soldier had disappeared from view, she whispered to Butler.

'You have seen my father, sir?'

Butler nodded his head.

'He has told you all?'—

Butler again signified a silent assent.

The tramp of the sentinel showed that he was again approaching the door; and when Mary turned her eyes in that direction, she beheld the watchful soldier halting in such a position as to enable him both to see and hear what was passing in the room. Without showing the least perturbation, or even appearing to notice the guard, she said in a gay and careless voice.—'My father and lieutenant Macdonald,—who is a good gentleman—think it belongs to christian people to do all the good we can for them that providence has put under us—and so, sir, I have been to gather you some black-berries, which I thought, may be, you would like, sir.'—

The sentinel walked away, and Mary smiled as she saw her little stratagem succeed.

'Bring me some paper,'—said Butler cautiously.—'You are a considerate girl,'—he continued, in a louder voice, —'and I thank you for this good-will.'—Then finding that the sentinel did not immediately return, he whispered.—'I wish to write to Robinson—you shall take the letter and read it to him.'—

'I will do my best,'—replied the maiden;—and again the sentinel interrupted the conference.

Mary, having arranged the table, left the room. In a

few moments she returned bringing with her the family Bible.

‘If you would like to read, sir,’—she said.—‘Here is a book that a body may look at a long time without getting tired of it. We have only got this and the Pilgrim’s Progress, and the hymn book in the house; but my father says this is worth all the others that ever were printed, put together,—and especially, sir, when one’s in distress, and away from their friends.’—

An expression of pleasure played across Butler’s features as he took the heavy volume from the girl.—

‘A thousand thanks to you, my pretty maiden,’—he replied,—‘I doubt not I shall grow both wiser and better under your tutoring. This kindness almost reconciles me to my fate.’

‘John is doing all he can for you—and he is a good helper to Mr. Robinson,’—said Mary in the same cautious whisper that she had first spoken in, as she retreated from the room. Butler opened the book, and found a sheet of paper folded away amongst the leaves; then closing it, he threw it upon his bed.

In due course of time, Mary Musgrove returned with a few dishes of food which she set out upon the table, and, in one of the successive visits which were employed in furnishing the repast, she took from beneath her apron a small ink-horn and pen, which she placed, unobserved by the sentinel, in Butler’s hand. Having done this, she retired leaving the prisoner to despatch his meal alone.

After dinner, Butler threw himself upon his bed, where he lay with the Bible opened out before him, with his back turned towards the door; and, whilst Mary Musgrove was engaged in removing the furniture of the table, he found means to write a few lines to Philip Lindsay.— He took the same opportunity to pen a short letter to Mildred;—and then to set down some directions for Horse Shoe Robinson, the purport of which was that the sergeant should take the two letters and depart, with all despatch, for the Dove Cote, and to put both into the hands of Mildred, with a request that she would procure him the necessary reply from her father. Horse Shoe was also directed to explain to Mildred such particulars

of Butler's history as were necessary to be made known for the accomplishment of the object of the mission.

When these papers were finished they were folded up into a small compass, and in the course of the evening put into Mary's hands, with a request that she would herself read the instructions intended for the sergeant, and apprise him of their contents when she delivered the papers to him.

So far all had succeeded well, and Butler found additional reason to dispel the gloom that hung upon his spirits, in the prospect that was now opened to him of enlisting strong and authoritative friends in the scheme of his liberation.

CHAPTER VII.

MARY MUSGROVE'S PERPLEXITIES.

As a mariner who watches the heavens from the deck, and notes the first uprising of the small cloud, 'no bigger than a man's hand,' that to his practised eye shows the sign of tempest; and anon, as the speck quickly changes into a lurid mass, whence volume after volume of dun vapour is driven, in curled billows forward,—covering the broad welkin with a gloomy pall,—he looks more frequently and more intently upward, anxious to lay his vessel safe, and assure himself of his proper course to steer: so,—not with the same doubt of safety, but with the same restless inspection of the heavens,—did Mary watch the slow approach of night. First, she looked wistfully at the declining sun, and observed with pleasure the night-hawk begin to soar: then, through the long twilight, she noted the thickening darkness, and saw the bat take wing, and heard the frog croaking from his pool. And as the stars, one by one, broke forth upon the night, it gladdened her to think the hour of her mission was approaching,—for she was troubled in her spirit and anxious to acquit herself of her charitable office;—and perhaps, too, it may be told of her, without prejudice to

her modest, maidenly emotions, a spur was given to her wishes by the hope of meeting John Ramsay.

For an hour after supper, she paced the porch, and still looked out upon the stars, to mark the slow waxing of the night; and, now, and then, she walked forth as far as the mill, and lingered by the bank of the river,—and again returned to ask the sentinel the hour.

‘You seem disturbed, Mary?’—said Macdonald playfully.—‘Now, I’ll venture to say I can guess your thoughts: this star gazing is a great tell-tale. You were just now thinking that, as the tug of the war is over, some lad who has borne a musket lately, will be very naturally tripping this way to-night, instead of going home to see his mother. Come,—isn’t that a good guess?’

‘Do you know him, sir?’—asked Mary with composure.

‘Ay, to be sure I do:—a good, brave fellow, who eats well, drinks well and fights well’—

‘All men do that now,’—replied the maiden,—‘but I am sure you are wrong, sir, if you think any such considers it worth his while to come here.’

‘He must come quickly, or we cannot let him in without a countersign,’—said the officer:—‘sergeant, order the tattoo to beat, it is nine o’clock. Mary, stay, I must cross-question you a little about this same gallant.’

‘Indeed, sir, I did but jest, and so, I thought, you did.—My father says it is not proper I should loiter to talk with the men; good night, sir,—it is our time for prayers.’—And with these words the young girl withdrew into the house.

In some half hour afterwards, Mary escaped by another door, and, taking a circuitous path through the garden, she passed behind the sentinel and sped towards the mill, intent upon keeping her appointment with the friends of Butler. As soon as she reached the river bank, she quickened her pace and hurried, with a nimble step, towards the distant thicket.

‘What ho! who goes there?’—shouted the voice of a man from the neighbourhood of the mill—‘who flies so fast?’—

‘Faith, Tom, it must be a ghost’—said a second voice, loud enough to be heard by the damsels, who now in-

creased the speed with which she fled towards the cover—

‘Follow, boy, follow and overhaul the chace!’

In an instant two of the soldiers of the guard rushed upon the track of the frightened girl.

‘Spare me, good sir,—for pity’s sake, spare me!’—exclaimed the maiden, suddenly turning round upon her pursuers.—

‘Where away so fast, young wench?’—said one of the men. ‘This is a strange time of night for girls to be flying into the woods.—What matter have you in hand that brings you here?—and what is your name?’—

‘I am the daughter of Allen Musgrove,’—replied Mary, indignantly,—‘and it will be for my father to inquire, why I should be scared and driven from his house by the soldiers that he has allowed to live in his barn.’

‘Is it so?’—said the first speaker,—‘then it is the miller’s own daughter, and we ask your pardon, if we have happened to give offence; but we only saw you flying along the bank of the river, and not knowing what it was,—why we thought it right to follow. But as it is all explained now, we will see you back to the house.’

‘I can find my way without help,’—replied the maiden. ‘It is enough for me to be frightened almost out of my wits, because I choose only to walk twenty steps from my father’s door after night-fall.’—

‘You are not angry, I hope, with us,’—said the other, —‘Bless your heart, we would not hurt a hair of your head!—Come,—that’s a pretty girl;—or if you care to walk still further, let us be a body guard for you. It is an hour when ghosts are like to be abroad.’

‘I wish none of your company,’—replied Mary.

‘Now, that’s not good-natured for so kind a girl as the miller’s daughter ought to be,’—said the second soldier.—‘Here we would do you a piece of service, and see how you treat us.’—

‘These pretty girls are privileged, Tom,’—said the other,—‘but they never mean what they say. We will stick to you, my lass, like good fellows, who have too much heart to see a girl in distress—so, you had best

take the good luck that God has given you in the way of an escort.'—

'I will see if my father can protect me,'—said Mary, hastening back towards the house so rapidly as almost to run.—'I will know if lieutenant Macdonald will allow his men to insult me.'

'Rather than run the risk of giving our young mistress offence, Tom,'—said the first soldier,—'we must let her take her own way. It's always polite for to offer a lady an arm when she can't see her road. But if she don't choose to take it—or lets you know that she don't want none of your company—why, well and good!—there's an end of a man's duty. So, joy go with you, my pretty lass!—These women,'—he added, in the ear of his companion,—'are the skittishest things in nature.'

The latter part of this speech entirely escaped Mary's ear, for she had already fled from the soldiers, and reached the gate. With a hurried step she entered upon the porch, and, without stopping to parley with those who occupied this part of the dwelling, retired to her chamber, and threw herself into a chair, where she sat for some time, panting with affright. As she gradually recovered her strength, she began to turn her thoughts upon her recent discomfiture; and it was with a deep sense of chagrin and disappointment, that she reflected upon her not being able successfully to renew her enterprise on the same night. The hour of meeting had arrived; the officers of the guard were still frequenting the porch; her conduct had already excited notice, and if she wished to be in a condition to render future service, her most obvious duty was to postpone any further attempt to deliver the papers until another time. On the other hand, she had reason to fear that John Ramsay would be hovering near to ascertain the cause of her failure to meet him, and might rashly resort to the same mode of conveying a signal which he had successfully practised heretofore. This would infallibly, she believed, provoke an investigation that might entirely frustrate all their views. 'But then John is a good soldier,'—she said, in the way of self-consolation,—'and will know that the enemy is awake;—because if it was not so, he would be

sure I would keep my word. And if he only takes that notion into his head, he is too careful to run the chance of spoiling all by coming here.'—

Still, with some little mistrust as to John's soldiership when it crossed the path of his love,—which naturally, she reflected, makes a man rash,—she thought it best to provide against accident, by throwing herself into the company of the officers who loitered about the door in idle discourse with her father. She accordingly left her room and, with an anxious and troubled heart, went out and seated herself quietly on the steps of the porch, where she remained for some time a silent but inattentive listener to the conversation of those around her.

As a part of that system of things by which it is contrived that the current of true love shall never run smooth, I have ever found that when it was peculiarly fitting that some grandam, uncle, cousin, father or guest, should retire early to bed, in order that some scheme of interest to young lovers might be successfully achieved,—precisely on such nights is the perversity of fate most conspicuous, in inclining the minds of such grandam, uncle, cousin, and so forth, to set up much longer than they are wont;—thus showing that the grooves and dove-tails of things in this world, are not nicely fitted to the occasions of those who deal in the tender passion.—And so it befel for poor Mary Musgrove this night.

The hour was now fast verging upon eleven, and she anxiously noted every sentence that was spoken, hoping it was to be the last;—and then she trembled to think that John, regardless of the danger, might be lurking near, and indiscreetly expose himself. And still the talkers discoursed as if they meant to sit up all night. It was a delicious, cool hour, after a sultry day, and there was luxury in the breeze; but as the minutes were counted over by the maiden, in their slow passage, her fears increased. At length, far off—as if it were a mile away—the clear notes of one whistling an old tune were heard. Mary involuntarily started from her seat, and moved along the little pathway towards the gate—her heart beating against her bosom as if it would have 'overborne its continents.'—The signal notes freshened upon the air,

and the tune came forth blithely and boldly, showing that the way-farer was trudging, with a light heart, down the main road towards the mill. The party in the porch, however, were too much engrossed in their colloquy to notice the incident. The whistling came still nearer—until, at last, it seemed to be scarce a gunshot from the house. Beyond this point it did not advance; but here indicated that the person from whom it proceeded had halted. If Mary's cheek could have been brought to the light, it would have shown how the blood had deserted it from very fear: her whole frame shook with this emotion. To exhibit her unconcern, which, in truth, was most sadly affected, she mingled amongst the company in the porch, and leant against the door-post. Still the whistling continued, with no symptom of retreat, and Mary impatiently walked towards the further end of the house. 'John Ramsay makes a fool of himself,'—she muttered peevishly.—'Hasn't he the sense to see I cannot get out?—What keeps the simple man dallying, shilly-shally, at the fence, as if he actually wanted them to take him?—I don't believe in the mighty sense and wisdom of these men!—If John had half an eye he would see that I couldn't get away to-night.'

As the maiden grew frowful, her fears had less mastery over her; and now, taking heart of grace, she returned to the porch.—

'Sergeant,'—said Macdonald, calling to one of his men,—'take two files and patrol the road until you ascertain who that fellow is that makes himself so merry to-night.—I thought it some fool,'—he continued, addressing himself to Allen Musgrave,—'who, as the poet says 'whistled as he went for want of thought,' but he seems to have a hankering after these premises, that is not exactly to my mind. Perhaps, after all, Mary,'—he added, privately in the maiden's ear,—'it is the lad I was telling you of;—and as he is a bashful youth, we will bring him in by force. You know, he can't help that;—and old dad here can never blame you if I should make the fellow come to see you against your will. Sergeant, treat the man civilly, you understand?—

'It is not worth your while to be sending after Adam

Gordon,'—said Mary, with some slight confusion in her accent,—‘he is only half-witted; and almost the only thing he does for a living, is to come down of nights here to the mill-dam, to bob for eels. If it wasn’t for that, his mother would go many a day without a meal.’

‘No matter, we will bring Adam in,’—replied the lieutenant,—‘and if he is good at his sport—why we will go and join him.’

‘He is shy of company,’—said Mary, still faltering in her speech,—‘and will not come amongst strangers.’—

Partly from a spirit of resignation, partly to avoid further exposure of her feelings, and in part too, perhaps, from some slight feeling of remorse, such as is natural to a virtuous and youthful mind, at being obliged to practice a deceit, however lawful, (as I contend it was in this case,) the maiden withdrew into the parlour, where, unseen by any, she offered up a short and earnest prayer for direction and forgiveness.

Meantime the patrole had set out, and, after the lapse of a short time, returned, when the officer reported that before his arrival, the person they had gone in quest of, had left the place,—and, in the darkness of the night, they had no clue to follow him. This was scarcely announced before the same whistle was heard, at the same remote point where it had first attracted Mary’s notice.

‘It is as our young mistress has said,’—muttered Macdonald,—‘some bumpkin, too shy to be caught,—and not worth the catching.—We have sat it out to-night long enough, friend Musgrove,—so, let’s to bed.’

In a few moments the party betook themselves to their several places of rest.

As Mary prepared herself for her couch, the anxious events of the night busied her thoughts, and the image of John Ramsay was summoned up alternately to be reproved and applauded.—‘If he is fool-hardy,’—she said, as she laid her head on the pillow,—‘no one will say he isn’t wise besides. And if he will be thrusting his head into danger, he knows right well how to get it out again. So God bless him, for a proper man, as he is!’—And thus, in a better temper with her lover, the maiden fell asleep.

In order to avert all suspicion of disloyalty from the

miller's family, Christopher Shaw had offered his services to Macdonald, to do duty as one of the detachment, during the period of Butler's detention in the house. The offer had been accepted, and Christopher was appointed to serve in the character of a quarter master, or purveyor for the little garrison,—a post, whose duties did not materially interfere with his daily occupation at the mill.

Mary was in the habit of communicating to Christopher all her secrets, and of enlisting his aid in her plans whenever it was necessary. And now, soon after the morning broke, the maiden arose and went to the mill, where she communicated to Christopher all the perplexities of the preceding night.

'The thing must be managed to-day,'—said the young man, after he had heard the whole story.—'I have provisions to collect from the neighborhood;—and what is to hinder you, Mary, from riding out with me,—if it should only be to buy some eggs?—and then, what is to hinder us from popping in upon David Ramsay, and there fixing the whole matter?'

'Will not the lieutenant be sending some of his own men with you?'—inquired the maid.

'He doesn't suspect us,'—answered Christopher, as cautiously as if the walls of his mill had ears.—'At any rate, we can try it, you know, and if the thing should take a wrong turn, you can only stay at home; and we may, at the worst, make another venture at night.'

'I have the letter in my bosom,'—said Mary,—'and will be ready immediately after breakfast.'

When the appointed time arrived, things went as favourably as Mary could have wished. Her good spirits had returned; and she plied her household duties with a happy cheerfulness in her looks, that completely disarmed all suspicion. She received the banter of Macdonald, as to the cause of her restlessness on the preceding night, with perfect good nature,—and when Christopher announced to the commanding officer his purpose of going out upon a purveying ride, and invited his cousin to accompany him,—she accepted the propo-

sal with such a tone of laughing pleasure, as put it on the footing of a pastime.

The horses were brought to the door, and the maiden and her escort rode cheerily forth. They were not long in accomplishing the five or six miles that brought them to David Ramsay's cabin. I need not tell the affectionate concern with which Mary Musgrove met her lover, John Ramsay; nor how she upbraided him as a silly fellow, for tramping and trudging about the mill, and whistling his signals, when he ought to have known, by her not coming to meet him, that there was good reason for it. Nor is it important to detail the circumstances of Horse Shoe's and John's fruitless expedition, and their disappointment at not seeing Mary; and how shrewdly, last night, Robinson guessed the true cause of it;—and how entirely he agreed with the maiden, before hand, in thinking John a venturesome, hair-brained fool, to put himself in danger, when he might have been certain it would have ended as it did, in a run from 'the rascally red coats,'—as John had to run, to get out of the clutches of the patrol.—My story requires that I should pass these things by, and go to the business in hand.

Horse Shoe and Ramsay had grown exceedingly impatient,—both because they were in hourly danger of being surprised by casual parties of the enemy, and because the time for useful action was fast gliding away. They had used every precaution to keep their visit to David Ramsay's a profound secret to the neighbourhood; and had, with that object, lain perdue in one of the small cabins, from which they might watch the approach of visitors, and, if need required, secure an immediate retreat. During the day, they seldom left their concealment,—confining all their out-door operations to the night.

A consultation was held in David Ramsay's cabin,—the letters were produced and delivered to Horse Shoe, and the instructions intended for him by Butler were carefully read. It was resolved that Horse Shoe should set out for the Dove Cote without delay,—taking the route through the mountain country of North Carolina, as that least likely to be interrupted by the British troops.

John Ramsay, for the present, was to return to the Fair Forest camp, to inform Williams of the state of affairs;—and he was hereafter to act as occasion might suggest. Christopher Shaw and Mary were to attend upon Butler, and communicate whatever might transpire of interest to David Ramsay, who promised to find means of intercourse with Williams or Sumpter, as circumstances should allow.

These matters being arranged, Mary and Christopher Shaw took their leaves of Ramsay's family, and went about the ostensible object of their expedition.

Horse Shoe's plan of travel during the first, and most perilous stages of his journey towards Virginia, was to avail himself of the darkness of the night;—and he accordingly resolved to set out as soon as this day should draw to a close. His immediate cares were, therefore, directed to making all the necessary preparations for his departure. Captain Peter was carefully tended, and supplied with a double allowance of provender; provisions were stowed away, both for himself and his trusty beast: his pistols were put in order:—his rifle cleaned out, and a supply of ammunition provided;—and, finally, the letters were sewed up in a leather pouch, and buckled around his body by a strap, inside of his clothes. It was no inconsiderable item in the sergeant's preparation for his expedition, to sit down and eat a meal, which, from the quantity bestowed, and the vigour with which the assault upon it was made, might have betokened a full week's starvation.

The day waned and the night came a welcome visiter to the sergeant; and, at that hour, which old chroniclers designate as 'inter canem et lupum,' captain Peter was brought to the door, ready dight for travel. Ramsay's family stood around,—and whilst Andy, with boyish affection, held Horse Shoe's rifle in his hand, the sergeant feelingly spoke the words of parting to his friends;—then, with a jaunty air of careless mirth, springing into his saddle, and receiving his trusty weapon from the young comrade of his late gallant adventure, he rode forth with as stout a heart as ever went with knight of chivalry to the field of romantic renown.

CHAPTER VIII.

A GLANCE AT THE DOVE COTE.—THE COMPANIONSHIP OF BROTHER AND SISTER.

OUR story once more brings us back to the Dove Cote. During the first week that followed her interview with Arthur Butler under the Fawn's Tower, Mildred was calm and thoughtful, and even melancholy: her usual customs of exercise were foregone, and her time was passed chiefly in her chamber. By degrees, however, her firm and resolute temper predominated over the sadness of her fortunes, and she began to resume that cheerfulness which circumstances can never long subdue in a strong and disciplined mind. She had grown, more than ever watchful of the public events, and sought, with an intense avidity, to obtain information in regard to the state of things in the south. She now felt herself closely allied to the cause in which Arthur Butler had embarked, and, therefore, caught up the floating rumours of the day, in what regarded the progress of the American arms in the southern expedition, with the interest of one who had a large stake depending on the issue.

She had received several letters from Butler, which detailed the progress of his journey from the Dove Cote to Gates' camp, and from thence to Horse Shoe's cottage. They were all written in the confident and even jocular tone of a light-hearted soldier, who sought to amuse his mistress; and they narrated such matters of personal history as were of a character to still her fears for his safety. Their effect upon Mildred was to warm up her enthusiasm, as well as to brighten her anticipations of the future,—and thus to increase the returning elasticity of her spirits. Up to this period, therefore, she grew every day more buoyant and playful in her temper, and brought herself to entertain a more sanguine reckoning of the eventual determination of affairs. She was now frequently on horseback, attended by her brother, with whom she scarcely ever failed to make a visit to the good mistress Dimock, where she either found a letter from Butler, or heard some of the thousand tidings which

report was forever busy in propagating or exaggerating in regard to the movements of the army.

‘I’ll warrant you, Arthur is a man for the pen as well as for the spur and broad-sword, my pretty lady,’—was one of the landlady’s comments, as she handed to Mildred the eighth or ninth epistle, that had fallen into her hands since Butler’s departure;—‘there scarcely comes me trotting by a soiled traveller with his head set northward, but it is—good woman, is this mistress Dimock’s? —and when I say, aye,—then here’s a letter madam, for you, that comes from the army:—and so, there’s Arthur’s own hand-writing to a great pacquet,—for mistress Dimock of the Rockfish inn, of Amherst;’—and not even, after all, one poor line for me, but just a cover, and the inside for Miss Mildred Lindsay of the Dove Cote. Ha, ha!—we old bodies are only stalking horses in this world.—But God bless him!—he is a fine and noble gentleman.’—And Mildred would take the pacquet and impatiently break the seal;—and, as she perused the close-written contents, the colour waxed and waned upon her cheek, and her eye would one instant sparkle with mirth, and in the next grow dim with a tear.—And when she had finished reading, she would secretly press the paper to her lips, and then bestow it away in her bosom,—evincing the earnest fondness of a devoted and enthusiastic nature.

Mildred and Henry were inseparable; and, in proportion as his sister’s zeal and attachment to the cause of independence became more active; did Henry’s inclination to become a partisan grow apace. Her’s was a character that would kindle the spirit of brave adventure in whatever field that character had room to display itself. There was in it a quiet and unostentatious but unvarying current of resolution, that shrunk before no perils, and that could never be moved by selfish inducements. Her feelings, acute and earnest, had given all their warmth and energy to her principles; and what she once believed her duty commanded, was pursued with that kind of devout self-dedication that gave it the force of a religious obligation:—it became a solemn, deep-seated, unalterable resolve. To this temper, which, by some secret of its

constitution, has a spell to sway the minds of mankind, there was added the grace of a soft and amiable, and exquisitely feminine address,—so natural, so unpretending and so gentle, that it might have conjured up rebellion and revolt through a whole nation of rough natures. The union of these two attributes of character,—both of them so rare and so excellent,—rendered Mildred Lindsay an object of very conspicuous interest in such a time as that of the revolutionary struggle. Her youth, her ready genius, her knowledge and her habits of reflection,—much in advance of her years,—enhanced the impression that her character was adapted to produce, and brought upon her, even in her secluded position, a large share of public observation. It was not wonderful that a mind so organized and accomplished, should have acquired an unlimited dominion over the frank, open-hearted and brave temper of her brother,—now just stepping beyond the confines of mere boyhood. Her influence over Henry was paramount and unbounded: her affections were his,—her faith was his,—her enthusiasm stole into and spread over his whole temper.

With these means of influence she had sedulously applied herself to infuse into Henry's mind her own sentiments, in regard to the war; and this purpose had led her to interest herself in subjects and pursuits, which, in general, are very foreign from her sex. Her desire to enlist his feelings in aid of Butler, and her conviction that a time was at hand when Henry might be useful, gave rise to an eager solicitude to see him well prepared for the emergencies of the day, by that necessary mode of education which, during the period of the revolution, was common amongst the young gentlemen of the country. He was a most willing and ready pupil,—and she delighted to encourage him in his inclination for military studies, however fanciful some of his conceptions in regard to them might be.—She, therefore, saw, with great satisfaction, the assiduous, though boyish devotion, with which he set himself to gain a knowledge of matters relating to the duties of a soldier. However little this may fall within the scope of female perception in ordinary times, it will not appear so much removed

from the capabilities or even the habits of the sex, when we reflect that in the convulsions of this great national struggle, when every resource of the country was drained for service, the events of the day were contemplated with no less interest by the women than by the men. The fervour with which the American women participated in the cares and sacrifices of the revolutionary war, has challenged the frequent notice and warmest praises of its chroniclers. Mildred but reflected, in this instance, the hues of the society around the Dove Cote,—which consisted of many families, scattered along the country side, composed of persons of elevated character, easy circumstances and of the staunchest whig politics,—with whom she held an uninterrupted and familiar intercourse.

Another consideration may serve to explain the somewhat masculine character of Mildred's pursuits. Her most intimate companion, at all times, and frequently, for weeks together, her only one, was her brother. These two had grown up together in all the confidence of childhood; and this confidence continued still unabated. Their pursuits, sports, exercises, thoughts and habits were alike,—with less of the discrimination, usual between the sexes, than is to be found between individuals in larger associations. They approximated each other in temper and disposition; and Henry might, in this regard, be said to be, without disparagement to his manly qualities, a girlish boy,—and Mildred, on the other hand, with as little derogation, to be a boyish girl. This home-bred freedom of nurture produced, in its development, some grotesque results, which my reader has, doubtless, heretofore observed with a smile; and it will, likewise, serve to explain some of the peculiar forms of intercourse which may hereafter be noticed between the brother and sister.

The news of the battle of Camden had not yet reached the neighbourhood of the Dove Cote; but the time drew nigh when all the country stood on tiptoe, in anxious suspense to receive tidings of that interesting event. A week had elapsed without bringing letters from Butler; and Mildred was growing uneasy at this interval of silence. There was a struggle in her mind,—an un-

pleasant foreboding that she was almost ashamed to acknowledge, and yet which she could not subdue. The country was full of reports of the hostile operations, and a thousand surmises were entertained, which varied according to the more sanguine or desponding tempers of the persons who made them. Mildred was taught by Butler to expect defeat, yet still she hoped for victory;—but the personal fate of her lover stole upon her conjectures, and she could not keep down the misgiving which affection generally exaggerates, and always renders painful. In this state of doubt, it was observable that her manners occasionally rose to a higher tone of playfulness than was natural to her; and by turns, they sank to a moody silence,—showing that the equipoise of the mind was disturbed, and that the scales did not hang true:—it was the struggle of mental resolution with a coward heart—a heart intimidated by its affections.

Such was the state of things when, in the latter fortnight of August, the morning ushered in a day of unsurpassed beauty. The air was light and elastic; the cool breeze played upon the shrubbery and stole the perfume of a thousand flowers. The birds sang with unwonted vivacity from the neighbouring trees; and the sun lighted up the mountains with a golden splendour,—the fast drifting clouds flinging their shadows upon the forest that clothed the hills around,—and the eagle, and the buzzard sailing in the highest heavens, or eddying around the beetling cliffs with a glad flight,—as if rejoicing in the luxuries of the cool summer morning. Breakfast was scarcely over before Henry was seen upon the terrace, arrayed in his hunting dress. His bugle was daintily suspended by a green cord across his shoulders: it was a neat and glittering instrument, whose garniture was bedizened with the coxcombry of silken tassels, and was displayed as ostentatiously as if worn by the hero of a melodrame.

Like St. Swithin in the ballad, he had ‘footed thrice the wold,’ when he put the bugle to his mouth and ‘blew a recheate both loud and long.’

‘How now, good master Puff?’—said Mildred, coming

up playfully to her brother,—‘what means this uproar?—Pray you have mercy on one’s ears?’—

Henry turned towards his sister, without taking the bugle from his lips, and continued the blast for a full minute; then, ceasing only from want of breath, he said, with a comic earnestness—

‘I’m practising my signals, sister,—I can give you ‘to Horse’ and ‘Reveillee, and ‘Roast Beef’ like a trained trumpeter.’

‘Truly you are a proper man, master,’—replied Mildred. ‘But it is hardly a time,—she continued, half-muttering to herself,—‘for you and me, Henry, to wear light hearts in our bosom.’—

‘Why, sister,’—said Henry, with some astonishment in his looks,—‘this seems to me to be the very time to practise my signals.—We are at the very tug of the war, and every man that has a sword, or bugle either, should be up and doing.’

‘How come on your studies, brother?’—interrupted Mildred, without heeding Henry’s interpretation of his duty.—

‘Oh, rarely!—I know most of the speeches of Coriolanus all by heart:—

‘Like an eagle in a dove cote, I
Fluttered your voices in Corioli:
Alone I did it.—Boy!’

he spouted, quoting from the play, and accompanying his recitation with some extravagant gestures—

‘This is easy work, Henry,’—said Mildred laughing—‘there is too much of the holyday play in that. I thought you were studying some graver things, instead of these bragging heroics. You pretended to be very earnest, but a short time ago, to make a soldier of yourself.’

‘Well, and don’t you call this soldiership? Suppose I were to pounce down upon Cornwallis—his lordship, as that fellow Tyrrel calls him—just in that same fashion. I warrant they would say there was some soldiership in it!—But, sister, haven’t I been studying the Attack and Defence of fortified places, I wonder?—And what call you that?—Look now,—here is a regular hexagon,—

continued Henry, making lines upon the gravel walk with a stick,—‘here is the bastion,—these lines are the flank,—the face,—the gorge:—here is the curtain. Now, my first parallel is around here, six hundred paces from the counterscarp. But I could have taken Charleston myself, in half the time that poking fellow, Clinton, did it, if I had been there, and one of his side, which—thank my stars,—I am not.’—

‘You are entirely out of my depth, brother?’—interrupted Mildred.

‘I know I am.—How should women be expected to understand these matters?—Go to your knitting, sister:—you can’t teach me.’

‘Have you studied the Military Catechism, Henry?—that, you know, Baron Steuben requires of all the young officers.’

‘Most.’—replied Henry,—‘Not quite through it.—I hate this getting prose by heart. Shakspeare is more to my mind than Baron Steuben. But I will tell you what I like, sister;—I like the management of the horse. I can passage, and lunge, and change feet, and throw upon the haunches, with e’er a man in Amherst or Albemarle either, may be.’

‘You told me you had practised firing from your saddle.’—

‘To be sure I did:—and look here,’—replied the cadet, taking off his cap and showing a hole in the cloth.—‘Do you see that, Mildred? I flung the cap into the air, and put a ball through it before it fell—at a gallop.’

‘Well done, master, you come on bravely!’

‘And another thing I have to tell you, which, perhaps, Mildred, you will laugh to hear:—I have taken to a rough way of sleeping.—I want to harden myself;—so, I fling a blanket on the floor and stretch out on it—and sleep like’—

‘Like what, good brother?—you are posed for a comparison.’

‘Like the sleeping beauty, sister.’—

‘Ha, ha!—that’s a most incongruous and impertinent simile!’—

‘Well—like a Trojan, or a woodman, or a dragoon,—

or like Stephen Foster,—and that is as far as sleeping can go. I have a notion of trying it in the woods, one of these nights—if I can get Stephen to go along.'

'Why not try it alone?'

'Why it's a sort of an awkward thing to be entirely by one's self in the woods, the livelong night—it is lonesome, you know, sister:—and, to tell truth, I almost suspect I am a little afraid of ghosts.'

'Indeed!—and you a man! That's a strange fear for a young Coriolanus. Suppose you should get into the wars, and should happen to be posted as a sentinel at some remote spot—far from your comrades—on picket—I think you call it? (Henry nodded)—on a dark night;—would you desert your duty, for fear of a goblin?'

'I would die first, Mildred. I would stick it out, if I made an earthquake by trembling in my shoes.'

Mildred laughed—

'And then if a ghost should rise up out of the ground,'—she continued with a mock solemnity of manner—

'I would whistle some tune,'—interrupted Henry.
'That's an excellent way to keep down fear.'

'Shame on you, to talk of fear, brother.'

'Only of ghosts, sister—not of men.'

'You must cure yourself of this childish apprehension, master.'

'And how shall I do so, Mildred? I have heard people say that the bravest men have been alarmed by spirits.'

'You must accustom yourself to midnight hours and dark places—all alone. Our poor mother taught you this fear.'

'I should think of *her*, Mildred—until my heart would burst, and my cheek grew pale as ashes,'—said Henry, with an earnest and solemn emphasis.

'Her spirit—could it rise—would love you, brother: it would never seek to do you harm,'—replied Mildred, thoughtfully.

'Sister,'—said Henry,—'you came here in sport—but you have made me very sad.'

Mildred walked off a few paces and remained gazing steadfastly over the parapet. When she looked back she saw Henry approaching her.

‘You stoop, brother, in your gait,’—she said,—‘that’s a slovenly habit.’

‘It comes, sister, of my climbing these mountains so much. We mountaineers naturally get a stoop on the hill-sides.—But if you think,’—continued Henry, reverting to the subject which had just been broken off,—‘it would make me bolder to watch of nights, I should not care to try it.’

‘I would have you,’—said Mildred,—‘walk your rounds, like a patrole, through the woods, from twelve until two, every night for a week.’

‘Agreed, sister:—rain or shine.’—

‘And then I shall think you completely cured of this unsoldierlike infirmity, when you are able to march as far as the church, and serve one tour of duty in the grave-yard.’

‘By myself?’—inquired Henry, with concern.

‘You wouldn’t have me go with you, brother?’

‘I should feel very brave if you did, Mildred;—for you are as brave as a general. But if Stephen Foster will keep in the neighbourhood—near enough to hear my ‘All’s well,’—I think I could stand it out.’

‘You must go alone,’—said Mildred, cheerfully,—‘before I shall think you fit to be promoted.’

‘If you say I must, sister Mildred, why, then I must: and there’s an end of it. But your discipline is forty times more severe than the German Baron’s at Richmond. Father looks pale this morning,’—continued Henry, as he turned his eyes towards the porch, where Mr. Lindsay was now seen walking forward and back, with his arms folded across his breast.—‘Something perpetually troubles him, Mildred.—I wish that devil, Tyrrel, had been buried before he ever found his way to the Dove Cote!—See, he comes this way.’

Both Mildred and Henry ran to meet Lindsay, and encountered him before he had advanced a dozen paces over the lawn.

‘Such a day, father!’—said Mildred, as she affectionately took his hand.—‘It is a luxury to breathe this air.’

‘God has given us a beautiful heaven, my children, and a rich and bountiful earth. He has filled them both

with blessings. Man only mars them with his cursed passions,'—said Lindsay, with a sober accent.

'You have heard bad news, father?'—said Henry, inquiringly,—'what has happened?'

Mildred grew suddenly pale.

'We shall hear glorious news, boy, before many days,'—replied Lindsay,—'as yet, all is uncertain. Henry,—away to your sports, or to your studies. Mildred, I have something for your ear,—and so, my child, walk with me a while.'

Henry took his leave, looking back anxiously at his sister, whose countenance expressed painful alarm. Mildred accompanied her father slowly and silently to the small verandah that shaded the door of the gable next the terrace.—

CHAPTER IX.

MILDRED PUT TO A SEVERE TRIAL:—HER FIRMNESS.

'My mind troubles me,'—said Lindsay:—'Mildred, hear me,—and mark what I say. Our fortunes are coming to a period of deep interest: it is therefore no time to deal in evasive speeches, or to dally with coy and girlish feelings.—I wish, my daughter, to be understood.'

'Father, have I offended you?'—inquired Mildred, struck with the painful and almost repulsive earnestness of Lindsay's manner.

'Arthur Butler has been at the Dove Cote,'—he said, sternly,—'and you have concealed it from me.—That was not like my child.'—

'Father!'—exclaimed Mildred, bursting into tears.—

'Nay—these tears shall not move me from my resolution. As a parent I had a right, Mildred, to expect obedience from you,—but you saw him in the very despite of my commands:—here, on the confines of the Dove Cote, you saw him.'

'I did—I did.'

'And you were silent,—and kept your secret from your father's bosom?'—

‘You forbade me to speak of him,’—replied Mildred, in a low and sobbing voice,—‘and banished me from your presence when I but brought his name upon my lips.’—

‘He is a villain, daughter,—a base wretch that would murder my peace, and steal my treasure from my heart.’

Mildred covered her eyes with her hands, and trembled in silent agony.

‘I have received letters,’—continued Lindsay,—‘that disclose to me a vile plot against my life. This same Butler—this furious and fanatic rebel—has been lurking in the neighbourhood of my house, to watch my family motions, to pry into the character of my guests, to possess himself of my secret confidences, to note the incoming and the out-going of my most attached friends, and thereupon to build an accusation of treason before this unholy and most accursed power that has usurped dominion in the land.—I am to be denounced to these malignant masters, and to suffer such penalties as their passions may adjudge.—And all this through the agency of a man who is cherished and applauded by mine own daughter?’

‘My dear father, who has thus abused your mind, and led your thoughts into a current so foreign from that calm judgment with which you have been accustomed to look upon the things of life?’—

‘Can you deny, Mildred, that this Butler followed Tyrrel to the Dove Cote;—lay concealed here, close at hand;—sought by discourse, through some of his coadjutors, with Tyrrel’s servant, to learn the object of Tyrrel’s visit;—and offered gross outrage to the man when he failed to persuade him to betray his master?—Can you deny this?—Can you deny that he fled precipitately from his hiding-place, when he could no longer conceal his purpose?—and, knowing these things, can you doubt he is a villain?’

‘He is no villain, father,’—said Mildred, indignantly.—‘These are the wretched forgeries of that unworthy man who has won your confidence—a man who is no less an enemy to your happiness than he is a selfish contriver against mine.—The story is not true: it is one of Tyrrel’s basest falsehoods.’—

‘And Butler was not here;—you would persuade me so, Mildred?’—

‘He was in the neighbourhood for a single night,—he journeyed southward in the course of his duty,’—answered Mildred, mildly.

‘And had no confederates with him?’—

‘He was attended by a guide—only one—and hurried onward without delay?’—

‘And you met him on that single night;—by accident, I suppose?’

‘Do you doubt my truth, father?’

‘Mildred, Mildred!—you will break my heart. Why was he here at all,—why did you meet him?’

‘He came, father,’—said Mildred, struggling to speak through a sudden burst of tears—

‘Silence,—I will hear no apology!’—exclaimed Lindsay.—Then relenting in an instant, he took his daughter’s hand, as he said—‘my child, thou art innocent in thy nature, and knowest not the evil imaginings of this world. He wickedly lied, if he told you that he came casually hither,—or that his stay was circumscribed to one short night. I have proofs,—full and satisfactory,—that, for several days, he lay concealed in this vicinity,—and, moreover, that his scheme was frustrated only by an unexpected discovery, made through the indiscretion of a drunken bully, who came linked with him in his foul embassy. It was a shameless lie, invented to impose upon your credulity, if he gave you room to believe otherwise.’—

‘Arthur Butler scorns a falsehood, father, with the deepest scorn that belongs to a noble mind, and would resent the charge with the spirit of a valiant and virtuous man. If Mr. Tyrrel have such accusations to make, it would be fitter they should be made face to face with the man he would slander, than in my father’s ear. But it is the nature of the serpent to sting in the grass,—not openly to encounter his victim.’

‘The first duty of a trusty friend is to give warning of the approach of an enemy—and that has Tyrrel done. For this act of service,—does he deserve your harsh

rebuke? Could you expect aught else of an honourable gentleman?—Shame on you, daughter!

‘Father, I know the tale to be wickedly, atrociously false. Arthur Butler is not your enemy. Sooner would he lay down his life than even indulge a thought of harm to you. His coming hither was not unknown to me;—his delay, but one brief night;—business of great moment called him hastily towards the army of the south.’

‘You speak like a girl, Mildred. I have, against this tale, the avowal of a loyal and brave soldier. Aye, and let me tell you,—favourably, as you may deem of this false and traitorous rebel,—his wily arts have been foiled, and quick vengeance is now upon his path:—his doom is fixed.’—

‘For heaven’s sake, father—dear father—tell me what this means.—Have you heard of Arthur?’—cried Mildred, in the most impassioned accents of distress,—at the same time throwing her head upon Lindsay’s breast.—‘Oh, God!—have you heard aught of harm to him?’—

‘Girl! foolish, mad, self-willed girl!—exclaimed Lindsay, disengaging himself from his daughter and rising from his seat, and angrily striding a few paces upon the terrace.—‘Dare you show this contumacy to me!—No,—I did not mean that:—have you the heart, Mildred, to indulge these passionate fervours for the man I hate more than I can hate any other living thing!—He, a wretch, upon whose head I invoke nightly curses!—A loathsome abhorred image to my mind.—Hear me, Mildred, and hear me, though your heart break while I utter it—may the felon’s death whelm him and his name in eternal disgrace!—may his present captivity be beset with all the horrors of friendless, unpitied,—’

‘His captivity, father! And has he then fallen into the hands of the enemy?—Quick—tell me all!—I shall die—my life is wrapped up in his,’—ejaculated Mildred, in agony, as she sprang towards her father and seized his arm, and then sank at his feet.—

‘For God’s sake, my child!’—said Lindsay, becoming alarmed at the violence of the paroxysm he had excited, and now lifting his daughter from the ground.—‘Mildred, speak!—girl!—This emotion will drive me mad. Oh,

fate, fate—how unerringly dost thou fulfil the sad predictions of my spirit!—How darkly does the curse hang upon my household!—Mildred!—dear daughter—pardon my rash speech!—I would not harm thee, child,—no—not for worlds!”—

‘Father, you have cruelly tortured my soul,’—said Mildred, reviving from the half lifeless state into which she had fallen, and which for some moments had denied her speech.—‘Tell me all:—on my knees, father; I implore you.’—

‘It was a hasty word, daughter,’—replied Lindsay, ill concealing the perturbation of his feelings.—‘I meant not what I said.’—

‘Nay, dear father,’—said Mildred,—‘I am prepared to hear the worst—you spoke of Arthur’s captivity.’—

‘It was only a rumour,’—replied Lindsay, struck with apprehension at his daughter’s earnestness, and now seeking to allay the feeling his hint had aroused in her mind;—‘it may be exaggerated by Tyrrel, whose letter, hastily written, mentions the fact—that Butler had been made a prisoner by some bands of Tories, amongst whom he had rashly ventured.—The clemency of his king may yet win him back to his allegiance. A salutary confinement, at least, will deprive him of the power of mischief. His lands will be confiscated, and the close of the war,—now fast approaching,—will find him a houseless adventurer, baffled in his treason, and unpitied by all good men. This should persuade you, Mildred, to renounce your unnatural attachment, and to think no more of one, whose cause heaven has never sanctioned, and whose condition in life should forbid all pretension to your regard—one, above all, repulsive even to loathing, to the thoughts of your father.’

‘I loved him father, in his happiest and brightest day,’—said Mildred firmly—‘I cannot desert him in his adversity.—Oh, speak to me no more!—Let me go to my chamber:—I am ill and cannot bear this torrent of your displeasure.’—

‘I will not detain you, Mildred. In sorrow and suffering, but still, with a father’s affection as warmly shining on you, as when, in earliest infancy, I fondled thee upon my

knee, I part with thee now. One kiss—girl.—There, let that make peace between us.—For your sake and my own, I pledge my word never to distress you with this subject again.—Destiny must have its way—and I must bide the inevitable doom.'

With a heavy heart, and an exhausted frame, Mildred slowly and tearfully withdrew.

Lindsay remained some time fixed upon the spot where his daughter had left him. He was like a man stupefied and astounded by a blow. His conference had ended in a manner that he had not prepared himself to expect. The imputed treachery of Butler, derived from Tyrrel's letters, had not struck alarm into the heart of Mildred, as he had supposed it could not fail to do. The wicked fabrication had only recoiled upon the inventor;—and Mildred, with the resolute, confident and unsaltering attachment of her nature, clung with a nobler devotion to her lover. To Lindsay, in whose mind no distrust of the honesty of Tyrrel could find shelter; whose prejudices and peculiar temperament came in aid of the gross and disgraceful imputation which the letters inferred, the constancy and generous fervour of his daughter, towards the cause of Butler, seemed to be a mad and fatal infatuation.

Ever since his first interview with Mildred on the subject of her attachment, his mind had been morbidly engrossed with the reflections to which it had given rise. There was such a steadiness of purpose apparent in her behaviour, such an unchangeable resolve avowed, as seemed to him, in the circumstances of her condition, to defy and stand apart from the ordinary and natural impulses by which human conduct is regulated. He grew daily more abstracted and moody in his contemplations;—and as study and thought gave a still graver complexion to his feelings, his mind fled back upon his presentiments;—and that intense, scholar-like superstition, which I have heretofore described as one of the tendencies of his nature, began more actively to conjure up its phantasmagoria before his mental vision. A predominating trait of this superstition, was an increasing conviction that, in Mildred's connection with Arthur Butler, there was associated some signal doom to himself, that was to

affect the fortunes of his race. It was a vague, misty, obscure consciousness of impending fate,—the loss of reason, or the loss of life that was to ensue upon that alliance if it should ever take place.

It was such a presentiment that now, in the solitary path of Lindsay's life, began to be magnified into a ripening certainty of ill. The needle of his mind trembled upon its pivot, and began to decline towards a fearful point—that point was—frenzy. His studies favoured this apprehension—they led him into the world of occult visions. The circumstances of his position favoured it. He was perplexed by the intrigues of politicians, against whom he had no defence in temper nor worldly skill:—he was deluded by false views of events:—he was embarrassed and dissatisfied with himself:—above all, he was wrought upon, bewildered and glamoured (to use a most expressive Scotch phrase) by the remembrance of a sickly vision.

Thus hunted and badgered by circumstances, he fled with avidity to the disclosures made in Tyrrel's letters, to try, as a last effort, their effect upon Mildred, hoping that the tale there told might divert her from a purpose which now fed all his melancholy.

The reader has just seen how the experiment had failed.

Lindsay retired to his study, and, through the remainder of the day, sought refuge from his meditations in the converse of his books. These mute companions, for once, failed to bring him their customary balm. His feelings had been turned, by the events of the morning, into a current that bore them impetuously along towards a dark and troubled ocean of thought; and when the shades of evening had fallen around him, he was seen pacing the terrace with a slow and measured step.—

‘It is plain, she passionately loves Butler,’—he said—‘in despite of all the visible influences around her. Her education, habits, affections, duty—all set in an opposing tide against this passion, and yet does it master them all.—That I should be bound to mine enemy by a chain, whose strongest link is forged by my own daughter.—She—Mildred!—No, no—that link was not forged by her: it hath

not its shape from human workmanship.—Oh, that like those inspired enthusiasts who, in times of old,—yea, and in a later day—have been able to open the Book of Destiny, and to read the passages of man's future life, I might get one glimpse of that forbidden page!—To what a charitable use might I apply the knowledge. Wise men have studied the journeyings of the stars, and have—as they deemed—discovered the secret spell by which yon shining orbs sway and compel the animal existences of this earth;—even as the moon governs the flow of the ocean, or the fever of the human brain. Who shall say what is the invisible tissue—what the innumerable cords—that tie this planet and all its material natures to the millions of worlds, with which it is affined? What is that mysterious thing which men call attraction, that steadies these spheres in their tangled pathways through the great void?—that urges their swift and fearful career into the track of their voyage, without the deviation of the breadth of a single hair—rolling on the same from eternity to eternity? How awfully does the thought annihilate our feeble and presumptuous philosophy?—Is it then to excite the scorn of the wise, if we assert that some kindred power may shape out and direct the wanderings of man?—that an unseen hand may lay the threads by which this tottering creature is to travel through the labyrinth of this world,—aye, and after it is done, to point out to him his course along the dark and chill valley, which the dead walk through, companionless and silent?—Have not men heard strange whispers in the breeze—the voice of warning?—Have they not felt the fanning of the wing that bore the secret messenger through the air?—Have they not seen some floating fold of the robe as it passed by?—Oh God!—have they not seen the dead arise?—What are these but the communings, the points of contact, between the earthy and spiritual worlds—the essences or intelligences that sometimes flit across the confine of our gross sphere, and speak to the children of clay? And wherefore do they speak, but that the initiated may regard the sign, and walk in safety?—Or, perchance, some mischief-hatching fiend,—for such, too, are permitted to be busy to mar the good that God has made—may speak in malice to

allure us from our better purpose. Aye—as aptly this, as the other. Miserable child of doubt, how art thou beset!—Let the vain pedant prate of his philosophy, let the soldier boast his valour—the learned scholar whisper his scepticism,—and the worldling laugh his scorn,—yet do they each and all yield homage to this belief. There comes a time of honest self-confession, of secret meditation to all,—and then the boding spirit rises to his proper mastery: then does instinct smother argument: then do the darkness of the midnight hour, the howling wind, the rush of the torrent, the lonesomeness of the forest and the field, shake the strong nerves,—and the feeble pygmy, man, trembles at his own imaginings.'—

In such a strain did Lindsay nurse his doubting superstition; and by these degrees was it that his mind soothed itself down into a calmer tone of resignation. In proportion as this fanciful and distempered philosophy inclined his reflection towards the belief of preternatural influences, it suggested excuses for Mildred's seeming contumacy, and inculcated a more indulgent sentiment of forbearance in his future intercourse with her.

Towards the confirmation of this temper an ordinary incident, which, at any other time, would have passed without comment, now contributed. A storm had arisen: the day, towards its close, had grown sultry, and had engendered one of those sudden gusts which belong to the summer in this region. It came, without premonition, in a violent tornado, that rushed through the air with the roar of a great cataract. Lindsay had scarcely time to retreat to the cover of the porch, before the heavy-charged cloud poured forth its fury in floods of rain. The incessant lightnings glittered on the descending drops, and illuminated the distant landscape, with more than the brilliancy of day. The most remote peaks of the mountain were sheeted with the glare; and the torrents that leaped down the nearer hill-sides sparkled with a dazzling radiance. Peal after peal of abrupt and crashing thunder roared through the heavens, and echoed with terrific reverberations along the valleys. Lindsay gazed upon this scene, from his secure cover, with mute interest,—inwardly aroused and delighted with

the grand and sublime conflict of the elements, in a spot of such wild and compatible magnificence:—the solemn and awful emotions excited by these phenomena were exaggerated by the peculiar mood of his mind, and now absorbed all his attention. After a brief interval, the rain ceased to fall, as suddenly as it had begun;—the thunder was silent, and only a few distant flashes of wide-spread light broke fitfully above the horizon. The stars soon again shone forth through a transparent and placid heaven, and the moon sailed in beauty along a cloudless sea. The frog chirped again from the trees, and the far-off owl hooted in the wood, resuming his melancholy song, that had been so briefly intermitted. The foaming river below, swollen by the recent rain, flung upward a more lively gush from its rocky bed: the cock was heard to crow, as if a new day had burst upon his harem; and the house dogs barked in sport as they gambolled over the wet grass.—

Lindsay looked forth and spoke—

‘How beautiful is the change!—But a moment since, and the angry elements were convulsed with the shock of war—and now, how calm!—My ancient oaks have weathered the gale, and not a branch has been torn from their hoary limbs:—not the most delicate of Mildred’s flowers,—not the tenderest shrub has been scathed by the threatening fires of heaven! The Dove Cote and its inmates have seen the storm sweep by without a vestige of harm. Kind heaven, grant that this may be a portent of our fortune,—and that, when this tempest of human passion has been spent, the Dove Cote and its inhabitants may come forth as tranquil, as safe, as happy, as now—more,—yes, more happy than now!—Our ways are in thy hands—and I would teach myself to submit to thy providence with patient hope. So, let it be!—I am resigned.’

As Lindsay still occupied his position in the porch, Stephen Foster appeared before him dripping with the rain of the late storm.

‘A letter, sir,’—said Stephen.—‘I have just rode from the post-office, and was almost overset in the gust:—it catched me upon the road—and it was as much as I could

do to cross the river. It's a mighty fretful piece of water after one of these here dashes.'—

Lindsay took the pacquet.

'Get your supper, good Stephen,'—he said.—'Order lights for me in the library!—Thank you—thank you!—'

When Lindsay opened the letter, he found it to contain tidings of the victory at Camden, written by Tyrrel. After he had perused the contents, it was with a triumphant smile that he exclaimed—'And it is come so soon!—Thank God, the omen has proved true! a calmer and a brighter hour at last opens upon us.'—

He left the study to communicate the news to his children, and spent the next hour with Mildred and Henry in the parlour. His feelings had risen to a happier key—and it was with some approach to cheerfulness—but little answered in the looks or feelings of his children—that he retired to his chamber at a late hour,—where sleep soon came, with its sweet oblivion, to repair his exhausted spirits, and to restore him to the quiet of an easy mind.

CHAPTER X.

MILDRED IN GRIEF.—SHE IS NEAR MAKING A DISCLOSURE.—A VISITER ARRIVES AT THE DOVE COTE.

'Then in that hour remorse he felt,
And his heart told him he had dealt
Unkindly with his child.' *Rogers.*

ON the following day Mildred confined herself to her chamber. She had passed a sleepless night, and the morning found her a pale, anxious and distressed watcher of the slow approach of light. Her thoughts were busy with the fate of Butler. This topic overwhelmed all other cares, and struck deep and unmitigated anguish into her mind. The hints that had been so indiscreetly dropped by her father, more than if the whole tale had been told, had worked upon her imagination, and conjured up to her apprehension the certain destruction of

her lover. In her interview with Lindsay, her emotions had been controlled by the extreme difficulty of her situation. The fear of rousing in her father that deep and solemn tone of passion, which had now become the infirmity of his mind, and almost threatened to 'deprive his sovereignty of reason,' and of which she was painfully aware, had subdued the strength of her own feelings—so far, at least, as to inculcate a more seeming moderation than, in other circumstances, she could have exhibited.—It was the struggle between filial affection and duty on the one side, and an ardent, though tremblingly-acknowledged, attachment on the other. The course that she had previously determined to pursue, in reference to the many earnest and assiduous efforts of Lindsay to persuade her from her love, was steadily to persevere in the open acknowledgment of her plighted vow, and endeavour to win her father's favour by a calm and gentle expostulation;—or to seek, in a respectful silence, the means of averting the occasion of that gusty and moody outbreak of temper, which the peculiar exacerbation of his mind, was apt to make frequent. She would have resorted to this silence in the late communion with Lindsay, if he had not, with an unusual bitterness, denounced Arthur Butler as the author of a hateful crime—a crime which she knew had been foully insinuated against him by a man, of whose subtle wickedness she was persuaded—and whom, of all others, she most heartily execrated. She was, therefore, led indignantly, though temperately, to repel the slander by which her father's hatred had been artfully envenomed. But when, in the fierce fervour of his displeasure, Lindsay had announced to her the danger that had befallen Butler, the disclosure opened to her mind a world of misery. The late silence of her lover had already alarmed her fears, and this announcement suggested the worst of the many anxious conjectures which her brooding spirit had imagined as the cause of that absence of tidings. Her emotions upon this disclosure, were those of a bursting heart that dared not trust itself with words;—and when her father, seeing the unlooked-for mischief he had done, sought to temper his speech, and retract

some of the harshness of his communication, by an explanation, the only effect was, for the moment, to take off the edge of her keenest grief. But when she left his presence, and recovered herself sufficiently to recall all that had passed, the dreadful thought of disaster to Butler, came back upon her imagination with all the horrors which a fond heart could summon around it. A weary hour was spent in sobs and tears; and it was only by the blandishments of her brother Henry's kind and earnest sympathy, when the youth found her in the parlour thus whelmed in sorrow,—and by his manly and cheering reckoning of the many chances of safety that attend the footsteps of a prudent and brave man,—that she began to regain that resolute equanimity that was a natural and even predominating attribute of her character.

When Lindsay came into the parlour with the tidings of the victory at Camden, such was the state in which he found her; and whilst he announced to her that event which had given him so much joy, he was not unheedful of the pang he had previously inflicted, and now endeavoured to make amends by throwing in some apparently casual, though intentional, reference to the condition of Butler, who, he doubted not, would now be disposed of on easy terms;—‘perhaps,’—he continued,—‘as the war was drawing to a close, and the royal clemency had been singularly considerate of the mistaken men who had taken arms against their king, he would, in a little while, be discharged on his parole.’—This reluctant and forced crumb of comfort, fell before one who had but little appetite to take it,—and Mildred received it only in cold silence. Henry, however, made better use of the event, and by that assiduity which, in true and gentle friendships, never wearies, and never misses its aim,—when that aim is to revive a sinking hope,—succeeded in lifting both his father and sister into a kindlier climate of feeling.—But solitude and her pillow ravelled all this work of charity. Fancy, that stirring tormentor of acute minds, summoned up all its phantoms to Mildred's waking fears, and the night was passed by her, as by one who could not be comforted. In the morning

she was ill, and therefore, as I have said, remained in her chamber.

Lindsay, ever solicitous for the happiness of his children, and keenly sensitive to whatever gave them pain, now that the turbid violence of his passion had subsided into a clearer and calmer medium, applied himself by every art which parental fondness could supply, to mitigate the suffering of his daughter. Like a man who, in a reckless and ungoverned moment, having done an injury which his heart revolts at, and having leisure to contemplate the wrong he has inflicted, hastens to administer comfort with an alacrity which even outruns the suggestions of ordinary affection,—so did he now betake himself to Mildred's chamber, and, with sentiments of mixed alarm and contrition, seek her forgiveness for what he acknowledged a rash and unbecoming assault upon her feelings.

His soothing did not reach the disease. They could give her no assurance of Butler's safety; and on that point alone all her anguish turned.—‘My dear, dear father,’—she said with a feeble and dejected voice,—‘how do you wrong me, by supposing I could harbour a sentiment that might cause me to doubt the love I bear you! I know and revere the purity of your nature and need no assurance from you that your affection itself has kindled up this warmth of temper. But you have opened a fountain of bitterness upon my feelings,’—she added, sobbing vehemently,—‘in what you have divulged relating to a man you loathe, and one, dear father,—take it from me now, as the expression of a sacred duty—one that I must ever love.—Call it fate,—call it infatuation;—say that it does not befit my womanly reserve to avow it—but if misfortune and death have fallen upon the head of Arthur Butler, there is that bond between us—that I must die.—Oh, father’—

As Mildred pronounced these words she had gradually raised herself into a sitting posture in her bed, and, at the conclusion, fell back exhausted upon her pillow. The enthusiasm, the violence and the intensity of her emotions had overborne her strength,—and, for some moments, she lay incapable of speech.—

'Mildred,—Mildred!—daughter!'—exclaimed Lindsay, in alarm,—'I forgive you, my child.—Great heaven if this should be too much for her sensitive nature, and she should die before my eyes!—Dear Mildred,'—he said in a softer accent as he kissed her pale forehead,—'but look up, and, and never, never more will I oppose your wish.'

'Father,'—she uttered in a scarce audible whisper.—

'Thank God, she revives!—Forbear to speak, my love;—that is enough. Do not exhaust your strength by another effort.'—

'Father,'—she repeated in a firmer accent.

'There, there, my child,'—continued Lindsay, fanning the air before her face with his hand—

'Father,'—again uttered Mildred.—'Tell me Arthur is safe.'—

'He is safe, my love—and thou shalt yet be happy.—Daughter,—no more;—compose yourself,—nor attempt again to speak.' And saying these words Lindsay stole out of the chamber and summoned one of the domestics to administer a cordial to the exhausted patient; and then gave orders that she should be left to recruit her strength by sleep.

Mildred by degrees revived. Jaded by mental affliction, she had sunk into repose; and, when another morning arrived, the lustre had returned to her eye, and her recovery was already well advanced. She did not yet venture from her chamber, but she was able to leave her bed and take the fresh air at her window.

Whilst she sat in the loose robe of an invalid, towards noon, looking out upon the green forest and smiling fields around her, with Henry close by her side, seeking to soothe and amuse her mind, they were enabled to descry a horseman, attended by a single servant, making his way up the hill from the ford, by the road that led directly to the door.

'As I live, sister,'—ejaculated Henry,—'there is Tyrrel, covered with dust—and his horse all but worn down by travel.'—

'Heaven forbid—that it should be Tyrrel indeed!'—said Mildred, growing paler and trembling as she spoke. 'Oh, what ill fortune brings him hither?'

'I'll be bound,'—replied Henry,—'that he comes with a whole budget of lies and foul thoughts. He has a knavish look, sister,—and has been hatching mischief with every step of his horse.—I, for one, will not see him;—unless I can't help it. And you, sister, have an excuse to keep your room:—so, he is like to have cold comfort here,—with his rascally news of victory.—We shall hear enough of Camden now. By-the-by, sister, I should like much to see our account of that business.—I would bet it gives another face to the matter. These Tories do so bespatter his lordship with praises—and tell such improbable things about their victories!—I will not see Tyrrel,—that's flat.'—

'Nay, brother,—not so fast. You must see him, for my sake. He has something to tell of Arthur. Persuade my father to ask him:—tell him, if need be, that I requested this. And, Henry, if he says that Arthur is safe and well,—if he has heard any thing of him,—knows any thing of him, fly to me and tell it all. And, remember, brother,'—she said earnestly,—'tell me all—whether it be good or bad.'—

'This is a new view of the case,'—said Henry.—'Mildred, you are a wise woman, and think more ahead than I do. I did not reflect that this fellow might know something of major Butler,—though I am pretty sure he kept as clear of the major as a clean pair of heels would allow him. And, moreover, I take upon me to say, that he will bring as little good news of our Arthur in this direction, as he ever did of a good act in his life. --But I will spy him out, sister, and report like a—like a—forty-two pounder, or the despatch of a general who has won a fight.—So, adieu, sister.'

By the time that Henry had reached the porch, Tyrrel was already there. He had dismounted, and his weary steed stood panting on the gravel walk, while the servant stripped him of his baggage.—

'Well met, good master Henry!'—said Tyrrel approaching and offering the youth his hand,—'I am somewhat of a soiled traveller, you see. Is your father at home?—And your sister,—how is she?'—

'My father is at home,'—replied Henry, dropping the

proffered hand of the visiter, almost as soon as it had touched his own.—‘I will send him to you, sir.’

‘But you have not asked me the news, Henry,’—said Tyrrel,—‘and, seeing that I have come from the very theatre of war, I could tell you something good.’—

‘I have heard my father speak of your good news,’—answered Henry, carelessly,—‘I do not serve under the same colours with you, sir.’

And the youth left the porch to announce the arrival of the traveller to Lindsay.—

‘There spoke the rebel Mildred!’—muttered Tyrrel, as Henry left his presence.

In an instant, Lindsay hastened from the library and received his guest with a warm welcome.

The first cares of his reception, and some necessary order relating to his comfort, being despatched, Tyrrel began to disburthen himself of his stock of particulars relating to the great and important movements of the opposing armies in the south. He had left Cornwallis a few days after the battle, and had travelled with post haste to Virginia, on a leave of absence. He described minutely the state of things consequent upon the recent victory; and it was with a tone of triumphant exultation that he frequently appealed to his predictions as to the course of events, when last at the Dove Cote. The conversation soon became too confidential for the presence even of Henry, who sat greedily devouring every word that fell from the lips of the narrator, and the further interview was transferred to the library.

Henry hastened back to Mildred.

‘The fellow is so full of politics, sister,’—said the eager scout,—‘that he has not dropped one solitary word about Butler. He talks of the province being brought back to a sense of its duty,—and public sentiment putting an end to this unnatural war—forsooth!—And his majesty reaping fresh laurels on the fields of Virginia! Let his majesty put in his sickle here—he shall reap as fine a crop of briars, to bind round his brow, as ever grew in a fence-corner!—But Butler!—Oh, no, he has nothing to say of Butler.—He is a cunning man, sister, and keeps out of the major’s way—take my word for that.’—

‘Brother, get you again to my father—and say to him that I desire to know what tidings Mr. Tyrrel brings us.—Say it in his ear privately, Henry.’—

The young emissary again took his leave, and, without apology, entered the library.

Mildred, in the meantime, restless and impatient, applied herself to the duties of the toilet, and, with the assistance of her maid, was soon in a condition to leave her chamber. She had, almost unwittingly, and in obedience to her engrossing wish to know something of Butler, made these preparations to appear in the parlour, without thinking of her repugnance to meet Tyrrel. And now, when she was on the point of going forth, her resolve changed, and she moved through the chamber, like a perturbed spirit, anxiously waiting the return of Henry. She walked to the window, whence looking out towards the terrace, she perceived that her father and his guest had strolled out upon the lawn, where they were moving forward, at a slow pace, whilst their gesticulations showed that they were engaged in an earnest conference.

Henry’s footsteps, at the same moment, were heard traversing the long passage, and Mildred, no longer able to restrain her eagerness, hastily left her room and met her brother, with whom she returned to the parlour.

‘My news, upon the whole, is good,’—said Henry, as he put his arm round Mildred’s waist.—‘When I entered the library, and took a seat by my father, he suddenly broke up some long talk that was going on, in which he looked very grave and, as if he knew what I came for—he is an excellent, kind father, sister, for all his moping and sad humours, and loves both you and me.’—

‘He does, Henry, and we must never forget it’—

‘I would fight for him to the very death, Mildred.—So, seeing that I looked as if you had sent me to him,—he turned, in a kind of careless way, and asked Tyrrel if he had heard any thing lately of Butler.’—

‘Well—brother.’—

‘I scarce thought to mention it, answered Tyrrel, but the man—think of that way of speaking of major Butler—the man had the temerity to push himself amongst the

loyal troops, and was made a prisoner: he was suspected to be a spy, and there was, as I have understood, an idea of trying him by court martial for it, and for other misdemeanours—of which I wrote you some particulars.—I believe, indeed, he was tried, and would, perhaps, have been shot'—

‘Oh, heaven!—brother—can this be true?’—exclaimed Mildred, as the colour deserted her cheek—

‘I give you, exactly, Tyrrel’s words,’—replied Henry,—‘but the court were attacked, said he, by some bands of Whigs who stole a march upon them,’—

‘And Arthur escaped?—Kind heaven, I thank thee!’—almost screamed Mildred, as she clasped her hands together.

‘So Tyrrel thinks,’—continued Henry.—‘At all events they did not shoot him, like a pack of cowardly knaves as they were. And as some Tory prisoners were taken and dragged away, by our good friend General Sumpter, who was the man—Tyrrel says—that set upon them—it is considered good policy—these were his words, sister—to spare the unnecessary effusion of blood, on both sides. And then my father asked Tyrrel if Cornwallis knew of these doings—and he answered, not,—that it was the indiscreet act of some mountain boys, who were in the habit of burning and slaying, against the wish of his Lordship: that the regular officers disapprove of harsh measures—and that peace now reigns all through the province.’

‘When they make a desert of the land, they call it peace,’—said Mildred, thoughtfully, quoting a translation of the beautiful passage of Tacitus.—‘This war is a dreadful trade’—

‘For us, sister, who stay at home,’—replied Henry.—‘But God is good to us, and will favour the right—and will protect the brave men who draw their swords to maintain it’—

‘From treachery, ambuscade, and privy murder,—I thank you, brother, for that word.—Heaven shield us, and those we love!—But these are fearful times.’—

CHAPTER XI.

CIRCUMSTANCES FAVOUR TYRREL'S INFLUENCE OVER LINDSAY.

THE discourse between Lindsay and Tyrrel was one of deep moment. Tyrrel had taken advantage of the pervading fervour which the late successes of the British arms had diffused amongst the adherents of the royal cause, in behalf of what was deemed their certain triumph, to urge forward his own views. This was the occasion of his present unexpected visit at the Dove Cote. His immediate aim was to plunge Lindsay into the contest, by forcing him to take some step that should so commit him, in the opinion of the republican government, as to leave him no chance of retreat, nor the means longer to enjoy the privileges of his late neutrality. He, unhappily, found Lindsay in a mood to favour this intrigue. The increasing anxieties of that gentleman's mind, his domestic griefs, his peculiar temperament, and the warmth of his political animosities, all stimulated him to the thought of some active participation in the struggle. Tyrrel had sufficient penetration to perceive that such was likely to be the current of Lindsay's feelings, and he had by frequent letters administered to this result.

There were several opulent families in the lower sections of the state, who still clung to the cause of the King, and who had been patiently awaiting the course of events, for the time when they might more boldly avow themselves. With the heads of these families Tyrrel had been in active correspondence, and it was now his design, which, under the sanction of the British leaders, he had already nearly matured, to bring these individuals together, into a secret council, that they might act in concert, and strengthen themselves by mutual alliance.—Immediately after the battle of Camden, it is known that Cornwallis had laid his plans for the invasion of North Carolina, by intrigues of the same kind:—it was only extending the system, a little in advance, to apply it to Virginia. Arrangements had been made for this meeting of malcontents to be held at the house of a Mr. Stanhope,

on one of the lower sections of the James river,—a gentleman of good repute, with whom Lindsay had long been in the relations of close friendship.

‘The moments are precious, and you are waited for,’—said Tyrrel, in the course of his conference with Lindsay;—‘we must strike whilst the iron is hot. Separated, as our good friends are from each other, you are now in the power, and at the mercy—which is a significant phrase—of the unruly government of congress. Your motions, therefore, should be prompt. There are seasons, in the history of every trouble, when the virtue of deliberation mainly lies in its rapidity and the boldness of its resolve. I beseech you, sir, to regard this as such a season, and to take the course which the honour of our sovereign demands, without further pause to think of consequences.’—

‘When you were here a month ago,’—replied Lindsay, —‘I had my scruples. But things have strangely altered in that short interval. Your standard floats more bravely over the path of invasion than I had deemed it possible. You charged me, then, with being a laggard, and, you may remember, even impeached my loyalty’—

‘I did you a grievous wrong, my dear friend;—and did I not know your generous nature pardoned, as soon as it was uttered, my rash and intemperate speech, it would have cost me many a pang of remorse. Even in this, good sir,’—said Tyrrel, smiling and laying his hand upon Lindsay’s shoulder,—‘even in this, you see how necessary is it that we should have a wise and considerate councillor to moderate the ungoverned zeal of us younger men.’—

‘My mind is made up,’—replied Lindsay.—‘I will attend the meeting.’—

‘And Mildred will be removed forthwith to Charleston?’—eagerly interrupted Tyrrel.

‘Ah, sir—not one word of that. If I attend this meeting, it must be in secret. Nor do I yet commit myself to its resolves. I shall be a listener only. I would learn what my compatriots think,—reserving to myself the right to act. Even yet, I would purchase peace with many a sacrifice. I abjure all violent measures of offence’—

‘I am content,’—answered Tyrrel,—‘that you should hold yourself unpledged to any measures which your gravest and severest judgment does not approve. Though I little doubt that, from all quarters, you will hear such tidings as shall convince you that the road, both of safety and honour, leads onward in this glorious enterprise. ‘Tis from this nettle danger, that we pluck the flower safety.’—Conscious of this, I would have Mildred and her brother cared for.’—

‘Mildred can never be yours,’—said Lindsay musing.—‘There is the thought that makes me pause. I believed, and so did you—that the favour this Butler had found with her, was the capricious and changeful fancy of a girl.—It is the devoted passion of a woman:—it has grown to be her faith, her honour, her religion.’—

‘Butler is a fool—a doomed madman,’—replied Tyrrel with earnestness.—‘He came here with the hellish purpose to betray you,—and he was silly enough to think that he could do so, and still win your daughter. She should be told of this.’—

‘She has been told of it—and she believes it not.’—

‘Was my avouch given to her for the truth of the fact?’

‘It was. And,—to speak plainly to you—it has only made your name hateful to her ear.’

‘Then shall she have proof of it—which she cannot doubt.—She shall have it in the recorded judgment of a court martial, which has condemned him as a traitor and a spy—she shall have it in the doom of his death, and the sequestration of his estate,’—exclaimed Tyrrel with a bitter malignity,—‘proud girl!’—

‘Remember yourself, sir!’—interrupted Lindsay, sternly.—‘This is not the language nor the tone fit for a father’s ear, when the subject of it is his own daughter.’—

Tyrrel was instantly recalled to his self-possession,—and with that humility which he could always assume when his own interest required it, spoke in a voice of sudden contrition—

‘Why, what a fool am I, to let my temper thus sway me! Humbly, most humbly, dear sir, do I intreat your forgiveness.—I love your daughter, and revere the earnest

enthusiasm of her nature,—and, therefore, have been galled beyond my proper show of duty, to learn that she could discredit my word.’—

‘I enjoin it upon you,’—said Lindsay,—that in your intercourse with my family here, you drop no word calculated to alarm my daughter for the safety of this Butler. It is a topic which distracts her, and must be avoided.’

‘For the present,’—replied Tyrrel,—‘as I have before told you, I think he is safe. The forfeiture of his estate is not a secret.—But, to business, my friend.—When shall we set out?’

‘To-morrow,’—answered Lindsay.—‘We must travel cautiously—and amongst our friends.’—

‘This disguise has served me so far,’—said Tyrrel,—‘I may the better trust to it when in your company.’—

Mildred and Henry remained in the parlour, and were there when Lindsay and his guest, having terminated their secret conference, returned to the house.

‘Your cheek denies your customary boast of good health, Miss Lindsay,’—said Tyrrel, respectfully approaching the lady, and with an air that seemed to indicate his expectation of a cold reception.—‘It grieves me to learn that, at a time when all good men are rejoicing in the prospect of peace, you should not be in a condition to share the common pleasure.’

‘I think there is small occasion for rejoicing in any quarter,’—replied Mildred, calmly.

‘Miss Lindsay would, perhaps be interested to hear,’—said Tyrrel, not discomfited by the evident aversion of the lady,—‘that I have, within a few days past, left the head-quarters of the British army, where I was enabled to glean some particulars of a friend of hers,—major Butler, of the continental service.’—

Mildred coloured, as she said in a faint voice.—‘He is my friend.’

‘He has been unfortunate,’—continued Tyrrel,—‘having fallen into the hands of some of our skirmishers. But I believe, I may assure Miss Lindsay, that he is both safe and well. He enjoys the reputation of being a brave gentleman. I may be permitted to say, that had his destiny

brought him under other colours, I should have been proud to be better known to him?—

‘Major Butler chooses his own colours,’—said Henry, interposing,—‘I don’t think destiny had much to do with it. He took his side because they wanted men to help out a brave war.’

Lindsay frowned, and strode once or twice across the apartment, during which an embarrassing silence prevailed.—

‘You are the same cockerel, you always were, Henry,’—said Tyrrel, with undaunted playfulness;—‘always warm for the fight.—But it is a christian duty, you know, to be peace-makers in such times as these.—We may trust, Miss Lindsay, that some conciliatory spirit shall arise to quell the quarrelsome humours of the people, and bring all things back to tranquillity. For myself, I devoutly wish it.’—

‘The day for such a spirit does not seem to be at hand,’—said Mildred, quietly rising to withdraw.

‘You are not well, my daughter,’—interposed Lindsay.—‘Mildred is but recently from a sick bed,’—he continued, addressing Tyrrel, in the way of apology for her marked coldness of demeanour.—

‘I am not well, father,’—replied Mildred,—‘I must be permitted to leave you;’—and she now retired.

When Henry soon afterwards joined her, he found her agitated and excited.—

‘Better known to Arthur Butler!’—she exclaimed, dwelling on the speech of Tyrrel.—‘He is better known already than he dreams of. Think, brother, of the cool hypocrisy of this bold schemer—this secret disturber of the quiet of our house—that he should dare boast to me of Arthur’s bravery?’—

‘And to talk about his colours too!’—said Henry.—‘Did you mark, sister, how I set him down—in spite of my father’s presence? And did you see how his brow blanched when I spoke my mind to him?—I trow, he will find me too hot a cockerel,—as he calls me,—to venture upon our colours again. I hold no terms with him, sister, more than yourself?’—

‘You will excuse me to my father, Henry—I will not go in to dinner to-day?’—

‘I wondered,’—replied Henry,—‘that you met him at all, sister;—but he took us unawares.—And, truly, I don’t think it would be safe to bring you near him again. So, I advise you,—keep your room.—As for me—tut!—I am not afraid to meet him.—I warrant he gets his own upon occasion!’

‘I intreat you, Henry,’—said Mildred,—‘to guard your temper.—It would give our father pain to hear a rash speech from you. It would answer no good end.’—

‘I will be as circumspect, Mildred,—as the state of the war requires,’—answered Henry.—‘Fight when it is necessary, and be silent when we can’t strike.’—

Henry now left his sister and went to his usual occupations.

Mildred, in accordance with the purpose expressed to her brother, did not appear at the dinner table; and the day was passed, by Lindsay and Tyrrel, in close communion over the topics connected with the object of the enterprise in which they were about to embark. Tyrrel had seen enough to convince him that he might, at least for the present, abandon all effort to win Mildred’s good opinion; and his whole thoughts were now bent to bring Lindsay into such an attitude of hostility to the republican authorities as would inevitably lead to his removal from the state, and perhaps compel him to retire to England. Either of these events would operate to the advantage of the aspiring and selfish policy by which Tyrrel hoped to accomplish his object.

In the course of the evening Lindsay held a short interview with his children, in which he made known to them that affairs of importance were about to call him away, for a fortnight perhaps, from the Dove Cote. It was in vain that Mildred endeavoured to turn him from his purpose, which, though undivulged to her, she conjectured to be, from its association with Tyrrel, some sinister political move, of which her father was to be the dupe.

In accordance with Lindsay’s intimation, he and Tyrrel set out, at an early hour of the following day, on their journey towards the low country.

CHAPTER XII.

A DOMESTIC SCENE AT THE DOVE COTE.

ON the third morning following Lindsay's and Tyrrel's departure, the season being now about the commencement of September, Henry was seen, after an unusually early breakfast, to come forth upon the glass-plot, in front of the house, bearing in his hand a short rifle,—his customary accompaniment of the bugle being slung across his shoulder. For some moments he was occupied in examining his weapon; then leaning it against a tree that stood upon the lawn, he put the bugle to his mouth and sounded a long and clear signal-note. The first effects of this spell were to bring up Bell, Blanch and Hylas, the three flapeared hounds, who came frisking over the grass with many antics that might be said to resemble the bows and curtsies of the human species, and which were accompanied by the houndish salutation of deep-mouthed howls, that the horn never fails to wake up in these animals.—

Soon after these, came striding up the hill, the long gaunt form of Stephen Foster, who mounting the stone wall on the lower side, with one bound, sprang over the thickset-hedge that begirt the terrace. He was now arrayed in a yellow hunting shirt that reached to the middle of his thigh, and which was decorated with an abundance of red fringe that bound the cape, elbows, wrists, and extremity of the skirt; and a square wool hat encircled with a broad red band, in one side of which was set the national ornament of the buck-tail.—Around his waist was buckled a broad buckskin belt; he was armed besides, with a rifle, little short of six feet in length.

Stephen Foster was one of that idle craft, who having no particular occupation, was, from this circumstance, by a contradiction in terms, usually called a man of all work. He belonged to that class of beings who are only to be found in a society where the ordinary menial employments are discharged by slaves; and was the tenant of a few acres of land, appertaining to the domain of the Dove Cote, where he professed to make his living by hus-

bandry. But by far the greater proportion of his revenues was derived from divers miscellaneous services,—such as driving a team of four lean horses, of which he was proprietor; hauling wood for fuel; assisting in the harvest fields; sometimes working in the garden; and, when required, riding errands—which he preferred to all other business. But labour was not Stephen's forte:—it was constitutionally a part of his system to postpone matters of work for pleasure; and, if there was any thing for which he was particularly famous, it was in avoiding all appearances of punctuality to irksome engagements.—If he can be said to have had a calling at all, it was that of a hunter—a species of employment that possessed a wonderful charm for his fancy, and which was excellently adapted both to his physical and moral qualities. He, therefore, gave much of his time to the concerns of venison and venison; and his skill with the rifle was such that he could make sure of putting a ball through the brain of a wild pigeon as far as he was able to draw a sight. He was skilled in the habits of all the forest-animals common to this part of Virginia, and accurately drew the line of distinction between vermin and game. He hunted wolves, bears, panthers, (painters, in his own pronunciation,) racoons, foxes, opossums, and squirrels; and trapped otter, beaver and muskrats; moreover, he was an expert gigger and bobber of eels, and well knew the troutting streams. For these pursuits he was endowed with a patient nature that could endure a whole day and night in the woods, without eating or sleeping;—my authority says nothing of his forbearance in the third primary want of humanity. He was a man of fine thews and sinews, stout and brave; and withal, of a generous, frank and invariable good nature. The war had furnished occasion for such talents as he possessed; and Stephen was now meditating a bold severance from his wife and children, who had heretofore exerted such a dominion over his affections, that he had not the heart to leave them. But the present difficulties of the nation had made such a cogent appeal to his patriotism, that he had resolved to take one campaign in the field, and thus give scope to his natural love of adventure. It was now his peculiar glory,

and one that wrought with a potent influence upon his self-love, that he held the post of lieutenant to the company of Amherst Rangers—a volunteer corps that had lately been organized with a view to the state of affairs in the south.

This worthy, when he had no expedition in hand, was generally to be found lounging about the mansion of the Dove Cote, in expectation of some call from Henry, between whom and himself there existed a mutual and somewhat exorbitant affection.

On his present appearance there was a broad, complacent grin on Stephen's features as he accosted the young bugleman with the interrogatory—

‘What’s in the wind now,—mister Henry?—Arter another buck, I reckon? And an elegant morning it is for a drive!—May be, the wind’s just a little too fresh—’cepting you was able to steal on the lower side of the game, and then the scent would come down like a rose. Thar’s a great advantage in being down the wind, because the animal can’t hear you breaking through the bushes—for the wind makes naturally such a twittering of the leaves that it deceives him, you see.’

‘I fancy I know a good hunting day, lieutenant Foster,’—said Henry, putting his arms akimbo,—‘as well as you.—Who told you I was going after a buck?—Why, man, if that had been my drift, I should have started you two hours ago.—But we have other business in hand, Stephen. There is such dreadful news in the country!—We shall march soon—take my word for it.—I am resolved to go, Stephen, as soon as ever the Rangers set out,—let my father say what he will!—It is time men should take their sides—that’s my opinion.’

‘Mister Henry, I wouldn’t advise you,’—said Stephen, with a wise shake of the head.—‘Your father would grieve himself to death if you was to leave him.’

‘Don’t believe the half of that, lieutenant. There would be a flurry for a little while, and after that, father would see that the thing couldn’t be helped—and so, he would have to be satisfied.—I’ll steal away—that’s flat.’

‘Well, take notice, Mister Henry,’—said Stephen, chuckling,—‘I give you my warning against it. But if

you do go along with me, I'll take as much care of you, as if you were my own son.'

'I know sister Mildred thinks,'—replied Henry,—'it wouldn't be very wrong in me to go;—and so, I'll leave her to make my peace at home. Besides, I am going on her account, just to try and hear something of major Butler.'—

'If that's her opinion,'—returned Stephen,—'thar isn't much wrong about it.—She is the head contriver, and main privy-councillor,'—added Stephen, laughing, as he used these slang words, with which he was in the habit of garnishing his conversation,—'of all matters that are done here in this house.'

'These are your new regimentals, Stephen,'—said Henry, looking at Foster's dress:—'you shine like a flecker on a sunny day.—It will please sister to the life to see you so spruce; she's a prodigious disciplinarian, and doesn't like to see us rebels, (here he put his hand to his mouth and pronounced this word with a mock circumspection,) worse dressed than the rascally red-coats. When do the Rangers march, Stephen?'—

'We are waiting for orders every day. We parade, you know, Mister Henry, this morning.'—

'You must plead off to-day,'—said Henry.—'I called you up to tell you that sister and I were going to ride;—and I wanted you to go with us. At any rate,—if you must go to the troop,—you can leave us on the road. You don't meet till twelve, and both sister and I want to talk to you. She commanded me to tell you this: I believe she wishes you to take a letter for her.—Poor Mildred doesn't know that I am going with you;—so, as to that, you needn't let on.—Go, Stephen,—have our horses ready as soon as you can get them. Quick, good Stephen.—Sister and I will wait for you on the lawn.'—

The lieutenant of the Rangers having received his orders, hurried away to attend to their execution.

Mildred was already apparelled for her ride, and came at this moment from the house along the gravel walk. Her cheek, lately pale, had now begun to show the ruddy hue of health. Her full, dark-blue eye, although habitually expressive of a thoughtful temperament, frequently

sparkled with the sudden flashes of a playful spirit, and oftener with the fire of an ardent resolution. Her features, marked by a well defined outline, bore a strong resemblance to her brother's; and, when animated by the quick-speeding emotions of her mind, presented a countenance unusually gifted with the graces of external beauty. The impression which her physiognomy conveyed, was that of an impassioned and enthusiastic nature, and of a feminine courage that was sufficient for any emergency. A clear skin gave brilliancy to her complexion; and although habits of exposure to the air had slightly impaired its lustre, the few traces, which this exposure left, rather communicated the agreeable idea of a wholesome and vigorous constitution. The tones of her voice were like the characteristics of her mind,—soft and gentle and full of harmony,—and, when stimulated by her feelings, rich, deep and commanding. Her figure, of what might be deemed a medium height in females, was neat and agile, well-proportioned, and combining the flexible ease proper to her sex, with a degree of steadiness and strength that might be denominated masculine. Her movement was exquisitely graceful and effortless,—distinguished by a ready hand and free step; and it was impossible to look upon her most familiar bearing, without being struck by the indication which it gave of a self-possessed, fearless and careering temper, allied to a mind raised above the multitude by a consciousness of intellectual force.

As Mildred advanced along the shaded walk, she was followed by a fantastical little attendant whom, in the toyish freak of a solitary and luxurious life, she had trained to fill the station of a lady's page. This was a diminutive negro boy, not above ten years of age, of a delicate figure, and now gaudily bedecked in a vest of scarlet cloth, a pair of loose white linen trowsers drawn at the ankle, and red slippers. A ruffle fell over his neck, and full white sleeves were fastened with silken cords at his wrists. A green velyet cap gave a finish to the apparel of this gorgeous little elf; and the dress, grotesque as it was, was not badly set off by the saucy, familiar port of the conceited menial. Whether he had been destined

from his birth to this pampered station,—or, accidentally, like many of the eastern monarchs, raised to the purple,—he bore the romantic name of Endymion, and was fully as much at the call of his patroness, and as fond of sleep, as him of Mount Latmos.—His business seemed to be at the present moment, to acquit himself of the responsible duty of holding an ivory-mounted riding-whip in readiness for the service of his mistress.

When Mildred had crossed the lawn and arrived at the spot where Henry now stood, she was saluted by her brother with—

‘Stand, my gentle sister,—you and your monkey!—Ah, Mildred,—you are not what you used to be; you have grown much too grave of late. Bear up, dear sister: for, after all, what is it!—Why we have been beaten, and we must fight it over again—that’s all. And as to the major,—your partiality magnifies his dangers. Hasn’t he an arm?—yes—and hasn’t he a leg?—which, in war, I hold to be just as useful sometimes.’—

‘There is a dreadful uncertainty, brother,’—replied Mildred.—‘I dream of the worst.’—

‘A fig for your dreams, sister Mildred! They have been all sorts of ways—and that you know. Now, I have a waking dream, and that is, that before you are twenty-four hours older you will hear of major Butler.’—

‘Would to heaven your dream may prove true!’—replied Mildred.—‘But, Henry, you love me,—and affection is an arrant cheat in its prophecies.’

‘Tush then, sister!—don’t talk of it. For when we know nothing, it does no good to get to fancying. These are the times to act,—and, perhaps, I’ll surprise you yet.’—

‘With what, good brother?’—

‘Order arms,’—replied Henry, evading his sister’s inquiry, and at the same time assuming a military erectness, and bringing his rifle briskly to the ground:—‘with the beauty of my drill, sister. It even surprises myself. You shall see me march.’ And here he sportively shouldered his rifle and stepped, with a measured pace, across the green, and then back again; whilst the saucy

Endymion, presuming on his privilege, with mimic gestures, followed immediately in Henry's rear,—taking large strides to keep his ground. When Henry perceived the apish minion thus upon his track he burst out into a laugh—

'You huge giant-killer, do you mock me?'—he exclaimed.—'Sister, I will smother your body-guard in the crown of my cap, if he isn't taught better manners.'—

'Henry, I cannot share your light heart with you,'—said Mildred sorrowfully,—'mine is heavy.'—

'And mine is yours, sister, light or heavy,—in sunshine or in storm—summer and winter—dear Mildred,—it is always yours. It was a trick of mine to amuse you. And if I do not seem to feel, sister, as you do, it is because I mean to act. We men have no time for low spirits.'

'Stephen Foster is here at the door with our horses, brother.—Boy, give me the whip—now, away. The gay feathers of this bird,'—said Mildred, as the little black retired,—'do not become a follower of mine.'—

The new aspect of affairs, since the defeat at Camden, had pressed grievously upon Mildred's spirits. The country was full of disheartening rumours, and every day added particulars that were of a nature to increase the distress. The bloody fate of the brave De Kalb, and the soldiers that fell by his side; the triumph with which Cornwallis had begun his preparations for further conquests; the destitution and disarray of the American army, now flying before its enemy; the tales of unsparring sequestration with which, in Carolina, the lands of those who still bore arms in the cause of independence, were visited; the military executions of prisoners charged with the violation of a constructive allegiance, in the conquered districts; the harsh measures which were adopted to break the heart of rebellion, that still lingered behind the march of the victorious army;—and, above all, the boastful confidence with which Cornwallis, by his proclamations, sought to open the way for his invasion of North Carolina and Virginia, by attempting to rally the liege subjects of the king under his standard:—all these events came on the wings of rumour, and had lighted up

a flame through the whole country. To Mildred, they all imported an ill omen as regarded the fate of Arthur Butler.—Now and then, a straggling soldier of Gates' broken force arrived at the Dove Cote, where he was received with an eager hospitality and closely questioned as to the events in which he had participated. But of Butler, not even the remotest tidings were obtained. For the present, the uncertainty of his fortune filled Mildred's thoughts with the most anxious and unhappy misgivings; and this frame of mind over-mastered all other feelings. The late visit of Tyrrel to the Dove Cote, and the abrupt departure of her father, with this individual, on an unavowed expedition, were not calculated to allay her fears; and she felt herself pressed on all sides with the presages of coming misfortune. In these difficulties she did not lose her fortitude; but, like a mariner benighted in a dangerous strait, she counted over the anxious moments of her voyage, expecting, at each succeeding instant, to hear the dreadful stranding of her bark upon the unseen rock, though bravely prepared for the worst.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ARRIVAL AT THE DOVE COTE.—MILDRED RESOLVES ON A PERILOUS ADVENTURE.

What will not woman, when she loves?—*Rogers.*

IT was in the state of painful expectation, described in the last chapter, that Mildred now rode out, daily, upon the highways, in the feeble hope of hearing something of importance from the casual wayfarers who, in the present excited condition of the country, were thronging the roads. On the morning to which our narrative refers, she had charged Henry to procure the attendance of Stephen Foster, to whom, as it was known that he was about to accompany his troop towards the scene of hostilities, she was anxious to entrust a letter for Butler, as well as to communicate to him some instructions relating to it.

Stephen was, accordingly, now in attendance. A sleek, full-blooded roan, of an active, deer-like figure, and shewing by his mettlesome antics the high training of a pampered favourite, stood, in the care of a groom, at the door; and Mildred, aided by her brother, sprang into her saddle, with the ease and confidence of one familiarized to the exploit. When mounted, she appeared to great advantage. She was an expert rider, and managed her horse with a dexterous grace. The very position of command and authority, which her saddle gave her, seemed to raise her spirits into a happier elevation.

'Follow me, mister Stephen,'—she said,—'I have service for you. And it will not be out of the fashion of the time that a lady should be squired by an armed soldier.—We take the road down the river. Have a care, brother, how you bound off at the start—the hill is steep, and a horse's foot is not over sure when pressed too rapidly on the descent.'

The cavalcade descended the hill, crossed the ford, and then took a direction, down the stream, by the road that led beneath the Fawn's Tower. Mildred sighed as she gazed around her, and saw the spot of her last meeting with Butler. The little skiff, by which her lover had glided across the water, now lay upon a dry bed of rock, in the same position, perhaps, where a month ago, he had left it. The summer drought had reduced the stream, and deprived the light boat, (whose tackle kept it prisoner to the root of the sycamore,) of the element on which it had floated. This spectacle suggested to Mildred's thoughts a melancholy image.—'Even thus,'—she muttered to herself,—'have I been left by him. He has gone to obey the calls of honour and duty—and I, fettered to my native woods, have seen the stream of happiness roll by,—one while swollen to a torrent, and again, dried up by the fervid heat of war,—until like this sun-withered bark, I have been left upon the shore, without one drop of that clear current on which alone I hoped to live.—Come hither, Stephen,'—she said, as she slackened the rein of her horse:—and the obedient attendant was immediately at her side.

‘You set out southward, with your comrades of the troop, in a few days?’—

‘Orders may come to-morrow,’—replied Foster.

‘It is no holiday game, that you are going to play,’—continued the lady.

‘When Congress cut out this here war for us, Miss Mildred,’—answered the hunter,—‘they didn’t count upon settling of it, without making some tall fellows the shorter. And it is my opinion that it is a pint of conscience that every man should take his spell of the work.’

‘You go to it with a good heart,’—said Mildred.—‘We women can only pray for you, lieutenant.’

‘I shall pull trigger with a steadier hand, ma’am—when I think that your father’s daughter is praying for me.’—

‘Stephen,’—continued Mildred,—‘you may chance to see some one whose duty may lead him further south than, perhaps, you may be required to travel:—I will give you a letter to a friend of mine, who, I fear, is in distress.—If such traveller be trusty, and willing to do me a service,—as, perhaps, he may for your sake,—I must beg you to put the letter in his charge,—and tell him to seek out major Butler, and contrive to have it delivered to him.’

‘If it concerns you, Miss Mildred, I will take upon myself to hunt major Butler—or I will make as sure of the letter reaching him as I may have a chance.’—

‘Many thanks, Stephen!—There is a purse containing some few pieces of gold for you. Do not spare the use of it to perform my wish.’

Stephen looked bashfully at the lady as she held the proffered purse in her hand—

‘Take it, Mr. Foster.—It is money to be employed in my service,—and it may stand you in good stead, when better friends are absent.’

The hunter uttered an awkward laugh—‘If you would allow me to take the smallest piece of the money, it would more than hire a man express.’—

‘Take it all, Stephen—it is but a trifle. They call this the sinew of war,’—said Mildred, smiling.

‘It’s an utter, moral and resolute impossibility,’—an-

swered Foster,—‘for me to take all that money.—Bless your soul, Miss Mildred, my pocket ar’n’t use to such company.’

‘Pshaw, Steve,’—ejaculated Henry,—‘you are the greenest soldier in these hills, to be playing boy about this money.—Take it, man, and none of your nonsense;—precious little gold you’ll see before you get back!’—

‘Well, I’ll not be ticklish about it,’—said Foster.—‘Empty the bag, Miss Mildred, into my hand.’—

‘I mean that you shall have the purse with it,’—added Mildred.

‘No, no—that’s too valuable a piece of fine silk network for me.’—

‘There again—lieutenant Foster?’—said Henry;—‘if you were not my superior officer, I would say you were a fool.’

‘Give it to me,’—replied Stephen, laughing,—‘I have heard of cheating money out of a man’s pocket, but I never saw it cheated into it before.’—

‘You shall have the letter to-morrow, Stephen,’—said Mildred,—‘and as you value your poor friend, who worked that purse with her own hands, do not fail to make an effort to learn something of major Butler, and to have my letter delivered to him. He was made a prisoner some where on his way to Georgia,—and I have heard escaped—but, perhaps, that’s not true. You may find some one who can tell you more about him. Inquire of all you meet:—and, Stephen, in my name, beg your comrades to aid you.—Remember,’—added Mildred, with a smile, ‘this is a lady’s secret.—I am sure you will keep it.’

‘Most sacrilegiously and with all possible punctuation?’—replied the woodsman.—‘And you shall hear of the major, Miss Mildred,—dead or alive.’—

‘Oh heaven!’—exclaimed Mildred, aloud:—and then, recollecting herself, she breathed in a whisper,—‘that word vibrated a note of fear.—Your zeal shall have my warmest gratitude, Stephen.’

By this time the party had reached the second ford, where the road recrossed the river, in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Dimock’s, and, in a few moments, they were at the door of the little inn.

A brief halt, and a few words with the good hostess, furnished Mildred neither with a letter, nor with any information of moment from the quarter where, at this time, the thoughts of nearly the whole American people were turned.

‘Woful days, Miss Mildred!’—said the landlady, shaking her head, and wearing a face of lugubrious length,—‘woful indeed! nothing but hurry skurry, and bragging and swearing.—What with Gates’ runaways, that—shame upon them!—come whipping post haste along the road; and messengers, dragoons and drill sergeants,—all out of breath, out of money, and out of every thing but appetites,—which, mercy on me! never fail in the worst of times:—and what with musterings of volunteers, and drumming and fifing of it, up hill and down dale,—it is as much as one can do to keep one’s wits.—Heaven help us, my dear!—I don’t know what we shall come to. But poor Arthur!”—she continued, in a mournful and lower key,—‘not one word of him. It looks awfully: I could almost sit down and weep.—Nevertheless, Miss Mildred, my child, be of good cheer—God will keep his foot from the path that leads to the snares—we must all trust in his goodness.’—

‘Alas, alas!”—breathed Mildred, in an accent of sorrow.—‘Brother, ride forward.—If a good word reaches you, mistress Dimock, send it to me—even if it be at midnight.’—

Mildred pursued her ride, and Henry, seeing how much she was dejected, applied himself, with the kindest assiduity, to bring back comfort and cheerfulness to her mind. He sought to amuse her with such fragments of the gossip of the country-side, as were likely to interest her patriotism; and he contrived to recal to her recollection passages in the life of Butler, which related to the perils he had heretofore encountered, and from which he had extricated himself by his address and soldiership; and Henry told these in such a way, as to infer from them arguments of comfort that suited the present state of his sister’s feelings. As was usual in most of the young cadet’s discourses, he glided into that half-boastful

and half-waggish vein, in which he delighted to refer to his own pursuits and aspirations after military glory.

‘A man naturally, sister,’—he said, erecting himself in his stirrups, and assuming the stiff carriage of a conceited young adjutant on a parade,—‘a man naturally feels proud on horseback. It is what I call glorification, to have a noble beast under you, that you can turn and wind and check and set forward, just as you please—as if his limbs were your own. You feel stronger,—and, in this world, I do believe a strong man is always proud. Now, I should think that a woman would feel even more so than a man,—because, being weak by nature, she must grow happier to think how much muscle she can put in motion by only pulling a rein.’—

‘There is some philosophy in that, Henry,’—replied Mildred.—

‘So there is, sister;—and I tell you more,—that when a person has this sort of glorification—as I call it—they always get more contented with themselves. And that’s the reason, as far as I am a judge, that you always feel in better spirits when you are on horseback,—and, especially, if it should be in front of a troop.—Halloo, Stephen!’—ejaculated Henry, taken by surprise, in the midst of his discourse, by the sight of a flock of wild turkeys that ran across the road, some hundred paces a-head. ‘Did you see that?—Halt man,—here’s game for us.’—And, in an instant, he sprang from his horse, which he fastened to one of the neighbouring trees, and ran off with his rifle in his hand, in pursuit of the flock.

Stephen, whose instincts were those of a keen sportsman, when game was before him, did the same thing; and in a few moments Mildred found herself left entirely alone in the road,—half disposed to chide and half to smile at the eager and ungallant desertion of her attendants, who were now in quick, but cautious, pursuit of the brood of turkeys. The speed with which these birds are accustomed to run through the woods, allured their pursuers to some distance into the depths of the forest; and Mildred patiently awaited the return of her companions, on the ground where they had left her.

After five or ten minutes had elapsed, it was with a

sensation of some little concern that she descried, upon the road, a stranger mounted on horseback, and coming at a brisk trot to the spot where she had halted. The appearance of the individual was that of one of the irregular soldiers who had accompanied Gates' army;—his dress was rustic, and his weapon, according to the almost universal fashion of the country troops, the long rifle. The condition of his sturdy steed showed long and fatiguing service; whilst the bold and manly person of the rider, left little room to suppose that he was to be classed amongst the many who had fled in panic from the field of action. As soon as the stranger became aware of the presence of the lady, he slackened his speed and approached with a respectful salutation—

‘If I mought be so bold, ma’am,—how far mought it be to a river they call the Rockfish?’—

‘It is scarce two miles away, sir,’—replied Mildred.

‘And there, if I don’t disremember,’—said the traveler,—‘is a house kept by the widow Dimock—the Blue Ball, I think?’

‘There is, sir’.—

‘And no forks in the road, betwixt this and the widow’s?’—

‘It is a plain road,’—replied Mildred.—

‘And about two miles beyont, is squire Lindsay’s,—at a place they call the Dove Cote?’—

‘Does your business take you there?’—asked Mildred, with interest,—‘are you from the army?—whence come you?’

‘Beg pardon, ma’am,’—replied the stranger, smiling,—‘but I am an old sodger, and rather warry about answering questions that consarn myself. I suppose, it is likely I mought see Mr. Lindsay?’—

‘Pray, sir, tell me what brings you here, and who you are? I have special reasons for presuming so far upon your kindness.—I, myself, live at the Dove Cote—and’—

‘Then, mayhap, you mought have hearn of one major Arthur Butler?’—

‘Oh yes, sir,—if you have any news of him—speak it to me quickly,’—exclaimed Mildred, with much agitation.

‘By that sparkling of your eye, ma’am, it is no fool’s

guess, that you are the identical particular lady that I have rode nigh on to five hundred miles to see. You have hearn the major tell of Horse Shoe Robinson'—

‘And Arthur Butler’—

‘He is well, madam, and in good heart, excepting some trifling drawbacks that don’t come to much account.’

‘Thank God, thank God, for this news!’—

‘I have brought two letters, Miss Lindsay,—from the major, for you,—they will tell you, I believe, mainly, that the major is in the hands of the Philistians,’—said Horse Shoe, rummaging through the plaits of his dress, and getting loose the belt and leather pouch from which, by the help of his jack-knife, he extricated the missives—‘but they leave the story to be told pretty much by me. The long and the short of it is, that the major is a prisoner and wants some assistance from you:—but there is no danger of any harm being done him.’—

Mildred eagerly tore open the letters and read them;—then heaving a sigh, she said.—‘He is closely watched, and galled with misfortune.—He refers to you, Mr. Robinson, and I must beg you to tell me all.’

Horse Shoe, with a cheerful and occasionally even with a laughing manner, adopted to reassure the lady and quell her fears, recounted all such particulars of Butler’s adventures, as were necessary to enable her to comprehend the nature of his present mission to the Dove Cote.

Before this narrative was brought to a close, Henry and Foster had returned, bringing with them a large turkey which Henry had shot, and which the young sportsman was exhibiting with ostentatious triumph.

‘Huzza,—here’s a new turn of good luck!—Horse Shoe Robinson—the brave sergeant.’—shouted Henry, as soon as he observed the stout figure of our old friend.—‘Is major Butler here too?’—he demanded, as he shook the sergeant’s hand,—‘or have you come alone? Now, sister, you ought to be a happy woman.—You bring us good news, Mr. Horse Shoe—I know you do.’—

‘The news is better than it mought have been if the Tories had had their way,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘But a

sodger's life has both shade and sunshine in it—and the major is now a little in the shade.'—

'Brother, mount quickly,'—said Mildred:—'we have business before us:—Mr. Robinson, ride beside me—I have much to say to you.'

Stephen Foster, after saluting the sergeant, and reminding Mildred of his engagement to meet his troop, took his leave of the party.

The rest repaired, with as much expedition as they were able to employ, to the Dove Cote,—Horse Shoe detailing to the brother and sister, as they went along, a great many particulars of the late history of Butler.

When they reached the house, orders were given for the accommodation of the sergeant; and the most sedulous attention was shown to every thing that regarded his comfort. Frequent conferences were held between Mildred and Henry, and the trusty emissary. The letters were reperused, and all the circumstances that belonged to Butler's means of liberation were anxiously discussed.

'How unlucky is it,'—said Mildred—'that my father should be absent at such a moment as this! Arthur's appeal to him would convince him how wicked was Tyrrel's charge against his honour. And yet, in my father's late mood, the appeal might have been ineffectual:—he might have refused.—Sergeant, we are in great difficulties—and I know not what to do. A letter, you say, has been written to Lord Cornwallis?'—

'Yes ma'am, and by a man who sharpened his pen with his sword.'—

'You heard nothing of the answer of his Lordship?'—

'There was not time to hear.'—

'Cornwallis will be prejudiced by those around him, and he will refuse,'—said Mildred with an air of deep solicitude.

'Not if he be the man I take him to be—young lady,'—replied Horse Shoe. 'The world says he is above doing a cowardly thing; and it isn't natural for one brave man to wish harm against another, except in open war.'

'Did you hear of one Tyrrel, in the British camp?—But how could you?—that was an assumed name'—

‘You mean the gentleman who was here when the major stopped at Mrs. Dimock’s?’—said Robinson:—‘that was the name the landlady spoke about—if I remember myself.—I did not hear of him, ma’am, in my travels;—but his servant, James Curry, I met oftener, I undertake to say, than the fellow wished. He was consarned in ambushing major Butler and me at Grindall’s Ford. It was our opinion he was hired.’—

‘There,’—exclaimed Mildred—‘that confirms what I guessed of Tyrrel’s villainy. I will go to Cornwallis myself: I will expose the whole matter to his lordship.’—Henry, my dear brother, it is a rash venture, but I will essay it. You must accompany and protect me.’

‘That’s a sudden thought, sister,—and you may count on my hearty good will, to help it along.—It is a brave thought of yours, besides,’—said Henry, pondering over it—‘and every body will praise you for it.’—

Robinson listened to this resolve with an incredulous ear.—

‘You wouldn’t venture, young madam, to trust yourself amongst such rough and unchristian people, as you would have to go among before you could see Cornwallis?—in danger of being taken up by out-posts and pickets, or arrested by patroles—or dragged about by dragoons and fellows that have more savagery in them than wolves.—Oh no, ma’am—you don’t know what you would have to put up with;—that’s onpossible. Mr. Henry, here, and me can take a letter.’—

‘I may not trust to letters—I must go myself. You will protect me, Mr. Robinson?—my brother and I will form some good excuse that shall take us through safely.’—

‘Sartainly, ma’am, I will stand by you, through all chances if you go,’—replied the sergeant. ‘But there’s not many women, with their eyes open, would set out on such a march.’

‘It will be easily achieved,’—said Mildred:—‘it is an honest and virtuous cause that takes me away, and I will attempt it with a valiant spirit. It cannot but come to good. My father’s name will give me free passage

through the enemy's lines. And you shall pass as my attendant.'

'If you have a heart stout enough, ma'am, for such hard fare, I believe I might undertake for your safe passage,'—answered Horse Shoe—'and it certainly would do the major great good to hear that you was stirring in this matter.'—

'Sergeant, recruit yourself as long as you think necessary,'—said Mildred;—'but if you can be ready to set out to-morrow, I should like to go then, and at an early hour.'—

'Don't stand upon my fatigue, young lady:—I never saw the time when I wan't ready to march at the shortest warning. With your leave, I will go look after my horse—captain Peter, I call him, ma'am. A little chance of a roll, and the privilege of a good green pasture soon puts him in marching trim.'

The sergeant now left the room.—

'Sister,'—said Henry,—'you never thought a better thought, and you never contrived a better act, than just taking this matter in hand yourself, under mine and Horse Shoe's protection. Because Horse Shoe is as brave a man as you ever fell in with,—and as for me, I'll back the sergeant.—We can finish the thing in two or three weeks—and then, when I see you safe home, I'll go and join the Rangers.'—

'It is a perilous and uncertain journey, brother,—but it is my duty.—I would rather fall beneath the calamities of war, than longer endure my present feelings.—Provide yourself, brother with all things requisite for our journey, and give old Isaac, the gardener, notice that he must go with us.—We shall set out to-morrow.—I will write a letter to my father to-night explaining my purpose.—And one thing, Henry;—you will be careful to say nothing to any one of the route we shall travel.'

'I'll take my carbine, sister,'—said Henry—'I can sling it with a strap.—And I was thinking I had better have a broad sword'—

'Leave that behind,'—replied Mildred, as a smile rose on her features.—

‘The bugle I will certainly take,’—added Henry;—‘because it might be useful in case we got separated;—and I will teach you to understand my signals. Isaac shall carry horse-pistols on his saddle—and the sergeant shall have a great wallet of provisions.—You see I understand campaigning, Mildred.—And now,’—added the eager young soldier, as he left the apartment.—‘Hurra for the volunteers of the Dove Cote!’—

CHAPTER XIV.

MILDRED BEGINS HER JOURNEY.

THE man who writes the history of woman’s love, will find himself employed in drawing out a tangled skein. It is a history of secret emotions and vivid contrasts, which may well go nigh to baffle his penetration and to puzzle his philosophy. There is in it a surface of timid and gentle bashfulness concealing an underflow of strong and heady passion: a seeming caprice that a breath may shake or a word alarm; yet, all the while, an earnest devotion of soul which, in its excited action, holds all danger cheap that crosses the path of its career. The sportive, changeful and coward nature that dallies with affection as a jest, and wins admiration by its affrighted coyness; that flies and would be followed; that revolts and would be soothed, intreated and on bended knee implored, before it is won;—that same nature will undergo the ordeal of the burning plough-share, take all the extremes of misery and distress, brave the fury of the elements and the wrath of man, and in every peril be a patient comforter, when the cause that moves her is the vindication of her love. Affection is to her what glory is to man, an impulse that inspires the most adventurous heroism.

There had been for some days past in Mildred’s mind an anxious misgiving of misfortune to Butler, which was but ill concealed in a quiet and reserved demeanour.

The argument of his safety seemed to have little to rest upon, and she could perceive that it was not believed by those who uttered it. There rose upon her thoughts imaginings or presentiments of ill, which she did not like to dwell upon, but which she could not banish. And now when Horse Shoe had told his tale, the incidents did not seem to warrant the levity with which he passed them by. She was afraid to express her doubts; and they brooded upon her mind, hatching pain and secret grief. It was almost an instinct, therefore, that directed her resolve, when she announced her determination to go in person in quest of Cornwallis, and to plead Butler's cause herself to the British general. Her soul rebelled at the gross calumny which had been invented to bring down vengeance upon Arthur's head; and she had no thought of thwarting the accuser's wickedness, but by an appeal to the highest power, for that redress which an honourable soldier, in her opinion, could not refuse, even to an enemy. As to the personal hazard, inconvenience, or difficulty of her projected enterprise, no thought of either for a moment occupied her. She saw but her purpose before her, and did not pause to reckon on the means by which she was to promote it. She reflected not on the censure of the world; nor on its ridicule; nor on its want of sympathy for her feelings:—she reflected only on her power to serve one dearer to her than a friend,—upon her duty,—and upon the agony of her doubts.—If her father had been at hand she might have appealed to him, and, perhaps, have submitted to his counsel; but he was absent, she knew not where,—and she was convinced that no time was to be lost.—'Even now, whilst we debate,'—she said,—'his life may be forfeited to the malice of the wicked men who have ensnared him.'

Her conduct in this crisis is not to be weighed in the scale wherein the seemly and decorous observances of female propriety are ordinarily balanced. The times, the occasion and the peculiar position of Mildred, take her case out of the pale of common events, and are entitled to another standard. She will be judged by the purity

of her heart, the fervour of her attachment, and her sense of the importance of the service she was about to confer. And with a knowledge of these, I must leave her vindication to the generosity of my reader.

When the morning came and breakfast was over, the horses were brought to the door. Henry was active in all the preliminary arrangements for the journey, and now bestirred himself with an increased air of personal importance. Isaac, a grey-haired negro, of a sedate, and, like all his tribe, of an abundantly thoughtful length of visage, appeared in a suit of livery, ready booted and spurred for his journey. A large portmanteau, containing a supply of baggage for his mistress, was duly strapped behind his saddle, whilst a pair of pistols were buckled upon the pommel. Henry's horse also had all the furniture necessary to a campaign, and the young martalist himself, notwithstanding his sister's disapproval, was begirt with a sword-belt, from which depended a light sabre, with which he was in the habit of exhibiting himself in the corps of the Rangers. His bugle hung gracefully by his side, and his carbine was already provided with a strap to sling it across his back. Stephen Foster was lost in wonder at these sudden preparations,—of the import of which he could gain no more intelligence from Henry than that a movement towards the army was intended, of a portentous character.

Horse Shoe sat quietly in the porch looking on with a professional unconcern, whilst his trusty Captain Peter, bearing a pair of saddle-bags, now stuffed with a plethora of provisions, slouched his head, in patient fixedness, waiting the order to move. A bevy of domestics hung around the scene of preparation, lost in conjectures as to the meaning of this strange array, and prosecuting an inquiry to satisfy themselves, with fruitless perseverance.

When Mildred appeared at the door she was habited for her journey. The house-keeper, an aged dame, stood near her:

'My travel, mistress Morrison,'—she said, addressing the matron, and at the same time putting a letter in her hand—'I trust will not keep me long from home. If my father should return before I do, be careful to give him

that.—Mr. Foster, you will not forget your promise,—she added, as she delivered the second letter, which notwithstanding her own expedition, she had prepared for Butler, in the hope that opportunity might favour its transmission by Stephen.

‘The gold,’—said Stephen, putting his hand in his pocket—you will want it yourself, Miss Mildred,—and I can do without it.’—

‘Never mind that,’—interrupted Mildred.—‘Keep your promise,—and I hope to be able to reward you more according to your deserts.’—

‘Heaven and the saints protect you, Miss Mildred!’—said the house-keeper, as the lady bade her farewell.—‘You leave us on some heavy errand.—God grant that you come back with a gayer face than you take away!—Then turning up her eyes, and raising her hands, she ejaculated.—‘This is an awful thing, and past my understanding!’

Mildred took leave of the rest of the group around the door, and was soon in her saddle. This was a signal for the rest to mount, and as Stephen Foster delivered Henry his rifle, the latter took occasion to whisper in the hunter’s ear—

‘It is not unlikely, Steve, that we may meet each other again over here in Carolina; so, remember to make inquiries for us, as you go along, and tell the men I hope to join them before they fire one shot in spite.—But mum, Steve,—not a word about our route.’

Stephen shook hands with his young comrade; and Henry, seeing that the rest of the party had already left the door and were some distance down the hill, called out with an elated tone of good humour—‘Farewell, Mrs. Morrison, and all the rest of you!’—and putting spurs to his horse galloped off to join his sister.

The route pursued by the travellers lay due south, and during the first three or four days of their journey they were still within the confines of Virginia. To travel on horseback was a customary feat, even for ladies, in those days of rough roads and scant means of locomotion, and such a cavalcade as we have described was calculated to excite no particular inquiry from the passer-by, beyond

that which would now be made on the appearance of any party of pleasure, upon the high-roads, in the course of a summer excursion. Mildred experienced severe fatigue in the first stages of her journey; but by degrees this wore off, and she was soon enabled to endure the long day's ride with scarcely less inconvenience than her fellow-travellers.

At that period there were but few inns in these thinly-peopled districts, and such as were already established were small and but meagerly provided. This deficiency was, in some degree, compensated by the good will with which the owners of private establishments in the country, received the better class of travellers, and the ready hospitality with which they entertained them. Henry took upon himself to obtain information of the gentlemen's seats that lay near the route of his journey, and to conduct the party to them whenever his sister's comfort required better accommodation than the common inns afforded.

As our travellers had thus far kept along that range of country which lay immediately under the mountains, they were not annoyed by the intense heats which, at this season, prevailed in the lowlands. The weather, ever since their departure, had been uncommonly fine, and as is usual in this district, the month of September had brought its cool, dewy nights, whilst the early hours of the morning were even marked by a little sharpness, almost approaching to frost. The effect of this on Mildred was to recruit the weariness of travel, and better enable her to encounter the noon-tide fervours of the sun; and she had so far endured the toils of her journey with an admirable spirit. Actual trial generally results in demonstrating how much we are prone to exaggerate in advance the difficulties of any undertaking: accordingly, Mildred's present experience strengthened her resolution to proceed, and even communicated an unexpected increase of contentment to her feelings.

On the fifth day the party crossed the river Dan, and entered the province of North Carolina. A small remnant of Gates' shattered army lay at Hillsborough, at no great distance from the frontier; and as Mildred was

anxious to avoid the inquiry or molestation to be expected in passing through a military post, she resolved to travel by a lower route; and Horse Shoe, therefore, at her suggestion, directed his journey towards the little village of Tarborough.

Cornwallis, it was understood, since the battle of Camden, had removed his head-quarters into the neighbourhood of the Waxhaws, some distance up the Catawba, where he was supposed to be yet stationary. The whole country in the neighbourhood of either army, was in a state of earnest preparation;—the British commander recruiting his forces for further and immediate operations; the American endeavouring to reassemble his feeble and scattered auxiliaries for defence. At the present moment actual hostilities between these two parties were entirely suspended, in anxious anticipation of the rapidly approaching renewal of the struggle. It was a breathing time when the panting combatants, exhausted by battle, stood sullenly eyeing each other and making ready—the one to strike, the other to ward off another staggering blow.

The country over which Mildred was now to travel, was calculated to tax her powers of endurance to the utmost. It was a dreary waste of barren wilderness, covered with an endless forest of gloomy pine, through which a heavy, sandy road crept in lurid and melancholy shade. Here and there a miserable hut occurred to view, with a few ragged inmates surrounded by all the signs of squalid poverty. The principal population were only to be seen along the banks of the rivers which penetrated into this region, some twenty or thirty miles distant from each other. The alluvial bottoms through which these streams found a channel to the ocean, were the only tracts of land of sufficient fertility to afford support to man—all between them was a sterile and gloomy forest.

Still, these regions were not deserted. Bodies of irregular troops, ill clothed, and worse armed, and generally bearing the haggard features of disease, such as mark the population of a sickly climate, were often encountered upon the road, directing their wearied march towards the

head-quarters of the republican army. The rigours of the southern summer had not yet abated; and it was with painful steps in the deep sand, amid clouds of suffocating dust, that these little detachments prosecuted their journey.

Mildred, so far from sinking under the weariness and increasing hardships of her present toils, seemed to be endowed with a capacity for sustaining them much beyond any thing that could have been believed of her sex. Her courage grew with the difficulties that beset her. She looked composedly upon the obstacles before her, and encountered them, not only without a murmur, but even with a cheerfulness to which she had hitherto been a stranger. The steadiness of her onward march, her unrepining patience, and the gentle solicitude with which she turned the thoughts of her companions from herself, and forbade the supposition that her powers were overtaxed,—showed how deeply her feelings were engaged in her enterprise, and how maturely her mind had taken its resolution.

‘One never would have guessed,’—said Horse Shoe, towards the close of the second day after they had entered North Carolina,—‘that a lady so daintily nursed as you was at home, Mistress Mildred, could have ever borne this here roughing of it, through these piney woods.—But I have made one observation, Miss Lindsay,—that no one can tell what they are fit for till they’re tried;—and on the back of that, I have another—that when there’s a great stir, that rouses up a whole country, it don’t much signify whether they are man or woman,—they all get roused alike. ‘Pon my word, ma’am, I have seen men,—who think themselves sodgers too,—that would be unwilling to trust themselves at this time o’ year through such a dried up piece of pine barren as we have been travelling over for two days past.’—

‘You remember the fable of the willow and the oak, Mr. Robinson,’—replied Mildred, smiling,—‘the storm may bring down the sturdy tree, but the supple shrub will bend before it without breaking.’

‘I’m not much given to religious takings-on,’—said the sergeant,—‘but sometimes a notion comes into my

head that looks a little that way,—and that is, when God appoints a thing to be done, he gives them that's to do it all the wherewithals. Now, as major Butler is a good man and a brave sodger—God bless him!—it does seem right that you, Mistress Lindsay, who, I take on me to understand enough of your consarns and his'n,—without offence,—to say has a leaning towards the major;—I say, it does seem right and natural that you should lend a hand to help him out of tribulation;—and so, you see, the cause being a good cause, the Lord has given you both wisdom and strength to do what is right.’—

‘We owe,—sergeant,—a duty to our country; and we serve God and our country both, when we strengthen the hands of its defenders.’

‘That's a valiant speech, young lady,—and it's a noble speech,’—said Horse Shoe, with an earnest emphasis.—‘I have often told the major that the women of this country, had as honest thoughts about this here war, and was as warm for our cause, as the men,—and some of them, perhaps, a little warmer. They could be pitted against the women of any quarter of the aqueous globe, in bearing and forbearing both, when it is for the good of the country.’—

‘Henry is asleep on his horse,’—said Mildred, looking at her brother, who now, jaded and worn with the effort of travel, was nodding and dropping his head forward, and almost losing his seat.—‘What, Henry,—brother?’—she added, loud enough to rouse up the young horseman,—‘My trusty cavalier, are you going to fall from your horse?—Where is all that boasted glorification, upon which you were disposed to be so eloquent only a week ago? I thought a man on horseback was naturally proud: I fear it was only on holiday occasions you meant, Henry. Hav'n't you a word for a sunny day and a dry journey? You lag more like a miller's boy with his bag of meal, than a young soldier setting out on his adventures.’

‘Ah, sister,’—said Henry, waking up,—‘this is nothing but pine—pine—and sand, without end. There is no game in the woods to keep a man on the look-out, except here and there a herd of wild hogs, that snort and run

from us, like a squadron of cavalry,—with their bristles set up on their backs as fierce as the back fin of a sunfish. There is not even grass to look at:—you might see a black snake running half a mile amongst the trees.—And then there are such great patches of burnt timber—every trunk staring right at you, as black as thunder.—I'm tired of it all—I want to see the green fields again.'

'And, in truth, brother, so do I: but not until we can bring merry faces to look upon them.—How far are we from Tarborough?'

'We should be drawing nigh to the town,'—replied Horse Shoe,—'for you may see that we shall soon be out of these woods, by the signs of open country ahead. The last squad of sodgers that passed us, said that when we came to the farms, we shouldn't be more than five miles from the town; and the sun isn't above an hour high.'

'In the hope of being soon housed, then, Mr. Robinson, I may confess to you I am somewhat weary:—but a good night's rest will put me in fair condition for to-morrow's ride again.'

After the lapse of an hour, the party were safely sheltered in a tolerably comfortable inn at the village: and Mildred, aided by the sedulous care of Henry, found herself well bestowed in the best chamber of the house.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM Tarborough our travellers continued their route towards the Pedee, by the main road which led through Cross creek, a small hamlet on Cape Fear river, near the site of the present town of Fayetteville. The general features of the country were even more forbidding than those I have already described as characteristic of this portion of North Carolina. Even to the present day, cultivation has done but little to cheer up the natural desolation of those tracts of wilderness which lie between the rivers. But at the early period to which the events I have been detailing have reference, the

journey undertaken by our little caravan might be compared to that which is now frequently made through the more southern extremity of the Union, from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico,—an attempt seldom essayed by a female, and sufficiently trying to the hardihood of the stoutest travellers. The forethought and attention of Horse Shoe Robinson, however, contributed to alleviate the pains of the enterprise, and to enable Mildred to overcome its difficulties.

In the present alarmed and excited state of this province, the party were less liable to interruption in this secluded and destitute section of the country, than they might have been, had they chosen a lower and more populous district; and the consciousness that every day's perseverance brought them nearer to the ultimate term of their journey, gave new vigour, at least, to Mildred's capacity to endure the privations to which she was exposed. But few vestiges of the war yet occurred to their view.—The great wilderness, like the great ocean, retains no traces of the passage of hostile bodies. Sometimes, indeed, the signs of a woodland encampment were visible in the midst of the forest, on the margin of some sluggish brook or around a sylvan fountain, where the impression of recent hoof-prints, the scattered fragments of brushwood cut for temporary shelter, and the still smouldering ashes of camp fires, showed that masses of men had been in motion. The deer fled, too, with a more frightened bound towards their coverts, as if lately alarmed by the pursuit of the huntsman,—but the images of devastation, which are associated with the horrid front of war, in the mind of all familiar with its ravage, were absent. The eternal, leafy shade, high arching over the heads of the wayfarers, furnished no object for human vengeance; and it still sighed in the fanning of the breeze, as of old it sighed before man claimed dominion in the soil it sheltered.—A far different scene was shortly to be looked upon by our venturesome friends.

Several days had again passed by,—for the journey through the wilderness had been slowly prosecuted—when Robinson, towards the approach of evening, announced to Mildred, his conjecture that they were not far

off the Pedee. The banks of this river had been the scene of frequent hostilities, and the war that had been carried on here was of the most ruthless kind. The river is characterized by a broad, deep and quiet stream, begirt with a vegetation of exceeding luxuriance. Its periodical overflow seems to have poured out upon its margin a soil of inexhaustible richness, that, for a mile or two on either side, forms a very striking contrast with the low, barren sand-hills that hem in the river plain. Along this tract of level border, all the way to the Atlantic, are found, as is usually the case throughout the Carolinas, the large plantations of opulent gentlemen, who, by the cultivation of rice and cotton, turn the fertility of the soil to the best account. These possessions, presenting the most assailable points to an enemy, and, indeed, almost the only ones in which the great interests of the province might be wounded, were, during the whole of that bloody struggle which distinguished the days of 'The Tory Ascendancy,' the constant objects of attack; and here the war was waged with a vindictive malignity, on the part of the British and Tory partisans, that is scarcely surpassed in the history of civil broils. The finest estates were sacked, the dwellings burnt, and the property destroyed with unsparing rage. The men were dragged from their houses and hung, the women and children turned without food or raiment into the wilderness, and political vengeance seemed to gorge itself to glutony upon its own rapine.

The thoughts of Robinson had been, for some days past, running upon the probable difficulties that might attend the guise in which he was now about to return to his native province. This was a subject of some concern, since he ran a risk of being compelled either to desert his charge, or to bring his companions into jeopardy, amongst the many persons of both armies who were, at least by report, acquainted with his name and his military connections. He had explained to Mildred the necessity of his appearing in some definite character, associated with the object of her journey, and of which, upon emergency, he might claim the benefit to retain his post near her. This matter was summarily settled by Henry.

'In general, Mr. Horse Shoe, you can call yourself Stephen Foster:—you know Steve;—and you can say that you are Mr. Philip Lindsay's gardener. Isaac, here, can let you enough into the craft to pass muster, if any of them should take it into their heads to examine you. Mind that, Isaac:—and recollect, old fellow, you are only sister Mildred's waiting man.'—

'Sartainly, master,'—replied Isaac.—

'And, sergeant, I'll tell you all about Steve;—so that you can get your lesson by heart. You have a wife and five children—remember that.—I'll give you all their names by-and-by.'—

'Thanks to the marcies of God—that ar'n't my misfortune yet,'—said Horse Shoe, laughing,—‘but, Mr. Henry, I have got conscience enough now for any lie that can be invented. The major and me talked that thing over, and he's of opinion that lying, in an enemy's country, is not forbidden in the scriptures. And I have hearn the preacher say that Rahab, who was not a woman of good fame no how, yet she was excused by the Lord for telling the king of Jericho a most thumping lie, consarning her not knowing what had become of the two men that Joshua, the judge of Israel, who was a general besides, had sent into the town to reconnoitre;—which was a strong case, mister Henry, seeing that Rahab, the harlot, was a taking of sides against her own people.—So, I like your plan and I'll stick by it.’

This being agreed upon, it became one of the amusements of the road-side to put the sergeant through his catechism, which was designed to make him familiar with the traits of private history relating to the Dove Cote and its appurtenances, that he might thereby maintain his identity, in the event of a close investigation.—Horse Shoe was but an awkward scholar in this school of disguise, and gave Henry sufficient employment to keep him in the path of probability;—and, indeed, the young teacher himself found it difficult to maintain an exact verisimilitude in the part which it was his own province to play in this deception.

On the evening to which we have alluded, the sergeant, finding himself within a short distance of the

district of country in which he was almost certain to encounter parties of both friends and foes, adopted a greater degree of circumspection than he had hitherto deemed it necessary to observe. His purpose was to halt upon the borders of the forest, and endeavour to obtain accurate information of the state of affairs along the river, before he entered upon this dangerous ground. Like a soldier who had a rich treasure to guard, he was determined to run no hazard that might be avoided, in the safe conduct of the lady in whose service he was enlisted.—In accordance with this caution, he directed the cavalcade to move onward at a moderate walk, in order that they might not reach the limit of the woodland before the dusk of the evening; and also in the hope of finding there some habitation where they might pass the night. They had not advanced far in this manner before the sergeant despaired, at some distance a-head, a small log hut standing by the road side, which, by the smoke that issued from the chimney, he perceived to be inhabited. Upon this discovery, he ordered the party to stop and await his return. Then giving spurs to his horse he galloped forward and, after a short interval of absence, returned, made a favourable report of his reconnoissance, and conducted his companions to the house.

The little cabin to which Mildred was thus introduced was the homestead of an honest whig soldier, by the name of Wingate, who was now in service, under the command of one of the most gallant partisans that any country ever produced,—Francis Marion, then recently promoted to the rank of a brigadier. The inmates were the soldier's family, consisting of a young woman and a number of small children,—all demonstrating by their appearance a condition of exceedingly limited comfort. The hut contained no more than two rooms, which exhibited but a scanty supply of the meanest furniture. The forest had been cleared for the space of a few acres around the dwelling, and these were occupied by a small garden or vegetable patch, meagerly stocked with scattered and half parched plants; and by a cornfield, along the skirts of which some lean hogs were seen groping with a felonious stealthiness. A shed, in the same en-

closure, formed a rendezvous for a few half-starved cattle, that, probably, obtained their principal but slender support from the neighbouring wood. Add to these, a troop of fowls, that were now at roost upon one of the trees hard by, and we have, probably, a tolerably correct inventory of the worldly goods of this little family.

The woman of the house was kind and hospitable, and her attentions were in no small degree quickened by the application of a few pieces of money, which Mildred insisted upon her receiving,—much to the discomfiture of the dame's self-possession,—the boon, consisting of hard coin, to an amount of which, perhaps, she had never before been mistress.

Mildred was exceedingly fatigued, and it was an object of early consideration to furnish her the means of rest. Our hostess, assisted by old Isaac, and officiously but awkwardly superintended by Horse Shoe, began her preparations for supper, to the abundance of which the provident sergeant was enabled to contribute some useful elements from his wallet. In one of the apartments of the hut, a shock-bed was spread for the lady, and by the assistance of her cloak and some other commodities, which had been provided as part of her travelling gear, she was supplied with a couch that formed no ill exchange for the weariness of her long-inhabited saddle. Use and necessity are kind nursing-mothers to our nature, and do not often fail to endow us with the qualities proper to the fortune they shape out for us. This was not Mildred's first experience of a homely lodging since she left the Dove Cote; and, as privation and toil have a faculty to convert the rough pallet of the peasant into a bed of down, she hailed the present prospect of rest with a contented and grateful spirit.

The supper being dispatched, our lady was left alone with her hostess, to seek the repose of which she stood so much in need.

The sergeant now set about making provision for the rest of his party. This was done by erecting a shelter beneath one of the trees of the forest, opposite to the door of the cabin. It was composed of a few boughs stacked against the trunk of the tree, sufficiently covered with

leaves to turn aside any rain that might happen to fall. Under this cover, Horse Shoe appointed that he and his comrades should pass the night, enjoining them to keep a regular watch for the security of the lady, whose welfare was now the object of his most sedulous attention. All these preparations were made with the exactness of military rule, and with a skill that greatly delighted Henry.

The long summer twilight had faded away. Mildred had been, from an early period, in the enjoyment of a profound slumber, and Henry and his negro ally were seated at the front of their sylvan tent. The sergeant had lighted his pipe, and now, taking his seat upon a log that lay near his post, he began to smoke in good earnest, with a mind as free from anxiety as if universal peace prevailed. In the sedate enjoyment of this luxury, he fell into a descent on matters and things, interlarded with long and strange stories of his own singular adventures, which he told to the no small edification and amusement of Henry and the negro.

The habits of the experienced soldier were curiously illustrated in the thoughtful and sober foresight with which Robinson adapted his plans to the exigencies of his condition, and then in the imperturbable light-heartedness with which, after his measures of safety were taken, he waited the progress of events. His watchfulness seemed to be an instinct, engendered by a familiarity with danger, whilst the steady and mirthful tone of his mind was an attribute that never gave way to the inroads of care. He was the same composed and self-possessed being in a besieged garrison, in the moment of a threatened escalade, as amongst his cronies by a winter fire-side.

‘In this here starlight, Mister Henry,’—he said, after he had puffed out two or three charges of his pipe—‘I can’t see your eyes, but by your yawning, I judge you are a little sleepy. Take my advice and turn in. A sodger ought to snatch his rest when he can get it. I’ll keep guard over our young lady—the Lord protect her, for a most an elegant and oncommon precious young creature!—Fling your great coat upon the leaves, and go at it, my lad, like a good fellow.’

‘If I was at home, Mr. Horse Shoe, at the Dove Cote, I could sit up all night listening to your stories,—but, I believe I am, bewitched to-night, for my eyelids, this hour past, have been snapping like rat traps. So, I’ll just stretch out for an hour or so, and then get up and take my turn at the guard.’—

‘Don’t trouble your head about watching,’—replied Horse Shoe—‘You are not old enough for that yet. At your time of life, Mister Lindsay, a good night’s rest, is the best part of a ration. And to-morrow, if I’m not mistaken, you will have need of all the strength you can muster to-night. As for me, it isn’t much account whether I’m asleep or awake.’—

‘Not so fast, sergeant,’—rejoined the youth.—‘I’m an older soldier than you take me for;—Stephen, and I have watched many a night for racoons. No, no, I’ll have my turn, towards morning.—So, you and Isaac, take the first part of the night between you—and if any thing should happen, call me—I’m one of your minute men. So, good night. My horse trots harder than I thought he did.’—

It was not long before our boasted minute man was locked up in a spell, apparently as profound as that which, the legend affirms, assailed the seven sleepers: and Isaac, not even waiting for the good example of his master, had already sunk upon the ground, with that facility which distinguishes his race,—the most uncaring and happiest of mortals.

CHAPTER XVI.

Our fortress is the good green wood,
Our tent the cypress tree,
We know the forest round us
As seamen know the sea.

We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.—*Bryant.*

THE faithful Horse Shoe being thus left to himself, replenished his pipe, and, taking his rifle in his hand, paced to and fro upon the border of the road,—holding communion with his own thoughts, carefully weighing the probabilities connected with his present singular expedition, and revolving, after his own fashion, the fortunes of Arthur Butler, and Mildred Lindsay.

It was within an hour of midnight, when the sergeant's meditations were interrupted by the tramp of a horse, approaching the hut, at a gallop. But a few moments elapsed before a traveller, who, in the star-light, Horse Shoe could discern to be armed, drew up his rein immediately at the door of the dwelling, against which he struck several blows with his weapon, calling out loudly, at the same time—

‘Mistress Wingate—for God's sake, open your door quickly!—I have news to tell you, good woman.’—

‘In the name of mercy!—who are you?’—exclaimed the voice of the dame within, whilst a note of alarm was also heard from her fellow-lodger.

‘What do you mean by this racket and clatter?’—demanded Horse Shoe, in the midst of the uproar, at the same time laying his hand upon the stranger's bridle rein.—‘What brings you here, sir?—Stand back. The women in that house are under my charge, and I won't have them disturbed.’—

‘If you are a friend to mistress Wingate,’—said the horseman, sternly,—‘speak the word.—If an enemy, I will shiver your skull with the butt of my musket.’

‘Don't be rash, good fellow,’—replied Horse Shoe,—

'I take it you and me are on the same side.—What's afoot that you stir in such a hurry?'—

'The Tories are afoot—the devil's afoot!—Open, mistress Wingate—open to Dick Peyton!'—

'The Lord preserve us!'—ejaculated the mistress of the hovel, as she opened the door.—'Bloody Spur—is it you? What ill luck brings you here to-night?'—

'A gang of Tories, mistress Wingate, from the Black river, under that cut-throat Fanning, crossed Pedee this morning at Lowder's lake. They have been thieving and burning as far as Waggamaw, and are now on the road home by the upper ferry. They will be along here in less than half an hour. Your husband, Bob Wingate, and myself were sent out by general Marion this morning to reconnoitre the roads. We fell in with the ruffians, after sun-set, below Lumberton, and have tracked them up here.—Bob has got a pistol-shot through his arm. He was lucky enough, however, to escape their clutches;—but believing they had a spite against him and would ride past his house to-night, he told me to call and give you warning,—and to help you to drive the cattle back into the swamp.'

'How many mought there be, friend?'—asked Horse Shoe calmly.—

'Between two and three hundred, at least,'—said the trooper,—'we counted fifty in the van-guard—those that followed made a long column of march. They have stolen a good many horses and cattle, all of which are with them, and several prisoners.'

'What ho—Isaac,—Henry Lindsay!—Fall to, and saddle, boys,'—shouted Horse Shoe.—'Miss Mildred, it will not do to stand.—I am sorry to break in upon your rest—but you must be ready to move in a few minutes.'

Every thing about the hut was now in confusion. Henry and the sergeant were equipping the horses, whilst Isaac was gathering up the baggage. Bloody Spur—to adopt the rider's *nom de guerre*,—had dismounted, and was busy in removing the few articles of value from the hut; the mother and children, meanwhile, were pouring forth loud lamentations.

Mildred, in the midst of this scene of uproar, hurriedly

made her preparations for departure; and whilst she was yet engaged in this care, a confused murmur was heard, at some distance up the road,—and the rattle of sabres, as well as the hoarse voice and abrupt laughter of men, announced that the freebooters were at no great distance from the dwelling.

‘Merciful heaven!’—exclaimed Mildred, giving way, for the first time, to her fears,—‘they are fast approaching and we shall be captured.’

‘Sister,’—said Henry, with scarcely less alarm,—‘I will die by your side, before they shall hurt a hair of your head.’—

Horse Shoe, who at this moment was tightening the girths of Mildred’s saddle, paused for an instant to listen, and then said—

‘The wind is north-east, young lady, and the voice sounds far to-night. One could hardly expect you to be cool, when one of these night-frays is coming on, but there’s no occasion to be frightened.—Now, ma’am, if you please, I’ll heave you into your seat. There,’—continued the sergeant, setting Mildred upon her horse,—‘you have got four good legs under you, and by a fair use of them will be as safe as a crowned king. Mister Henry, mount, and ride with your sister slowly down the road, till I overtake you.’—

Henry obeyed the order.

‘Is the portmanteau and the rest of the baggage all safe, Isaac? Don’t be flurried, you old sinner, but look about you, before you start off.’

‘All safe,’—replied the negro.

‘Up and follow your master, then.—Hark you, Mr. Bloody Spur,’—said Horse Shoe, as Isaac rode off, to the trooper, who was still actively employed in turning the cattle loose from the enclosure,—‘what is the best road hereabouts for my squad to keep out of the way of these bullies?’

‘About a mile from here, take a road that strikes into the woods upon your right hand,’—answered the trooper hastily,—‘it will lead you up the river to the falls of Pedee. If you should meet any of Marion’s men, tell them what you have seen;—and say Dick Peyton will be along close after you.’

‘Where is Marion?’—asked the sergeant, mounting his horse.

‘What man, that knows Frank Marion, could ever answer that question?’—said the trooper.—‘He is every where, friend.—But you have no time to lose: be off.’

As Bloody Spur said this, he disappeared, driving the cattle before him; whilst the mother, laden with an infant and as many pieces of furniture as she could carry, and followed by her terrified children, fled towards the neighbouring thicket.

Horse Shoe, in a few moments, overtook his companions, and, urging them forward at a rapid flight, soon reached the diverging road, along which they journeyed, with unabated speed, for upwards of a mile.

‘How do you bear it, sister?’—asked Henry, with concern.

‘Ah, brother, with a sore heart to be made so painfully acquainted with these frightful scenes. I lose all thought of my own annoyance, in seeing the calamities that are heaped upon the unoffending family of a man who dares to draw his sword for his country.’

‘Yes ma’am,’—said Horse Shoe, gravely,—‘these incarnivorous devils have broken the rest of many a good woman in the Carolinas, before they routed you out to-night, ma’am. But it is one of God’s mercies to see how you keep up under it.’

‘Mine’s a trifling grievance, good sergeant: I lose but a little repose:—that poor mother flies to save her children, uncertain, perhaps, of to-morrow’s subsistence;—and her husband’s life is in daily peril.—It is a sad lot.—Yet truly,’—added Mildred with a sigh,—‘mine is scarcely better.—Gracious heaven!’—she exclaimed, looking behind her,—‘they have set fire to the dwelling!’—

In the quarter to which she directed her eyes, the horizon was already illuminated with the blaze of Win-gate’s hut. The light grew brighter for a short interval, and brought into bold relief, upon the sky, the tall, dark forms of the stately pines of which the forest was composed.

‘They are fools, as well as villains,’—said Horse Shoe, with an angry vehemence.—‘They have had liquor to-

night, or they would hardly kindle up a blaze which should rouse every Whig on Pedee to track them like hounds. It would be sport worth riding to look at, if Marion should get a glimpse of that fire.—But these wolves have grown obstropolous ever since Horatio Gates made his fox-paw at Camden.'

'Oh,—it is a most savage war,'—said Mildred,—'that roots up the humble hearth, and fires the lowly roof, where none but defenceless women and children abide. I shudder to think of such wanton barbarity.'

'There's the thing, Miss Lindsay, that turns all our blood bitter.—Man to man is fair game, all the world over: but this here stealing of cattle, and burning of houses, and even cutting up by the roots the plants of the 'arth,—and turning of women and children naked into the swamps, in the dead of night—it's a sorry business to tell of a christian people—and a cowardly business for a nation that's a boasting of its bravery.'

The light of the conflagration had soon died away, and our wanderers pursued their solitary road in darkness, ignorant of the country through which they passed, and uncertain of the point to which they tended. A full hour had gone by in this state of suspense, and Robinson had once more resolved to make a halt, and encamp his party in the woods. Before, however, he could put this design into execution, he was unexpectedly challenged, from the road-side, with the military demand of—'who goes there?'

'Travellers,'—was the reply.

'Where do you come from, and where are you going?'

'The first question I can answer,'—said Horse Shoe,—'and that is, from Old Virginny—a fortnight ago,—but, to-night, from a tolerable snug lodging, where some on-mannerly fellows troubled our sleep.—But as to where we're going,—it's more likely you can tell that for us.'—

'You are saucy, sir.'—

'It's more than I meant to be,'—replied the sergeant.—'Mayhap you mought have hearn of a man they call Bloody Spur?'

'He has pricked your pillows for you—has he?—Dick Peyton is good at that.'—said a second questioner.

'Aha, comrades,—I understand you now,'—said Horse Shoe, with alacrity.—'Dick Peyton and Bob Wingate both belong to your party.—Am I right?—We are friends to Marion.'

'And therefore friends to us,'—said the patrole.—'Your name, sir, and the number you have in company?'

'Take us to the general and we will answer that,'—replied Horse Shoe.—'The Tories have set upon Wingate's house and burnt it to the ground. It's like we may be able to tell something worth hearing at headquarters. Your man, Bloody Spur, gave us in charge to report him, and to say that he would soon follow upon our track. I wonder that he isn't here before now.'

'I will remain,'—said one of the soldiers to his companion,—'you shall take charge of the travellers.'

The trooper accordingly turned his horse's head, and commanded Horse Shoe and his party to follow.

The scout conducted our adventurers along a by-road that led round the head of a marsh, and through several thickets which, in the darkness of the night, were penetrated with great difficulty; during this ride he interrogated Horse Shoe as to the events of the late inroad of the Tories. He and his comrade had been stationed upon the path where the sergeant encountered them, to direct the out-riding parties of his corps to the spot of Marion's encampment,—the policy of this wary officer being to shift his station so frequently, as almost equally to defy the search of friend and foe. Peyton and Wingate were both expected, and the trooper who remained behind only waited to conduct them to the commanding officer, who had, since the disappearance of day-light, formed a bivouac in this neighbourhood. Marion's custom was to order his reconnoitring parties to return to him by designated roads, where videttes were directed to repair in order to inform them of his position—a fact which, as his movements were accomplished with wonderful celerity and secrecy, they were generally unable to ascertain in any other way.

At length, emerging from the thicket, and crossing what seemed, by theplash of the horse's feet, a morass, the party, under the guidance of the scout, came upon a

piece of thinly-timbered woodland, which, rising by a gentle slope, furnished what might be called an island of dry ground, that seemed to be only accessible by crossing the circumjacent swamp. Upon this spot were encamped, in the rudest form of the bivouac, a party of cavalry, which might have amounted to two hundred men. Several fires, whose ruddy glare had been discerned for the last half mile of the journey, were blazing forth from different quarters of the wood, and threw a bold and sharp light upon the figures of men and horses, imparting a feature of lively, picturesque beauty to the scene. The greater portion of the soldiers were stretched beneath the trees, with no other covering than the leafy bowers above them. The horses were picketed in the neighbourhood of their riders,—and the confused array of saddles, sabres, muskets, rifles, and other warlike implements, that were hung upon projecting boughs, or leant against the trunks, as they caught the flashes of the frequent fires, seemed to be magnified in number equal to the furniture of thrice the force. Sentinels were seen pacing their limits on the outskirts of this company, and small bodies of patrols on horseback, moved across the encampment with the regularity of military discipline. Here and there, as if regardless of rest, or awaiting some soon-expected tour of duty, small knots of men sat together amusing themselves, by torch-light, at cards;—and, more appropriately, others had extended their torpid frames in sleep upon their grassy pallets and knapsack pillows.

‘We have seen war in its horrors,’—exclaimed Mildred, with an involuntary vivacity;—‘and here it is in all its romance!’

‘Sister, I wish you were at home,’—said Henry, eagerly,—‘and Steve and I had the Rangers on this field to-night. I would undertake to command a picket with any man here!’—

To Horse Shoe, these were familiar scenes, and he could not comprehend the source of that sudden interest which had so vividly aroused the admiration of his companions; but asking the guide to conduct them immediately to general Marion, he followed the soldier

across the whole extent of the bivouac, until they halted beneath a large tree, near which a few officers were assembled. One of this group was seated on the ground; and, close by him, planted in the soil, a blazing pine-faggot flung a broad light upon a saddle, the broad flap of which the officer had converted, for the occasion, into a writing desk.

‘Make way for a squad of travellers picked up on the road to-night,’—said the scout in a loud voice.—‘They wish to see general Marion.’

In a moment our party were surrounded by the officers; and Horse Shoe, unceremoniously dismounting, addressed the person nearest to him:—

‘A lady, sir, from Virginny, that I started with from her father’s house,—to fetch to Carolina; but who, has been most audaciously unhoused and unbedded in the very middle of the night, by a hellish pack of Tories.’

‘My name is Lindsay, sir,’—said Henry, riding to the front;—‘my sister and myself were travelling south,—and have been obliged to fly to-night, before a detachment of horse stealers’—

‘From Bob Wingate’s,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘as I should judge, some six miles back. I want to report to general Marion:—the lady, likewise, is tired—as she has good right to be.’—

The officer to whom this was addressed, directed a soldier to seek general Marion, and then approaching Mildred, said:—

‘Madam, we can promise but little accommodation suitable to a lady: the greenwood tree is but an uncouth resting place; but what we can supply, shall be heartily at your service.’

‘I feel sufficiently thankful,’—replied Mildred,—‘to know that I am in the hands of friends.’—

‘Sister, alight,’—said Henry, who now stood beside her stirrup, and offered his hand:—and in a moment Mildred was on her feet.

The officer then conducted her to a bank, upon which a few blankets were thrown by some of the soldiers in attendance.—‘If this strange place does not alarm you,’—

he said,—‘you may perhaps find needful repose upon a couch, even as rough as this.’—

‘You are very kind,’—replied Mildred, seating herself.—‘Brother, do not quit my side,’—she added, in a low voice,—‘I feel foolishly afraid.’—

But a few moments elapsed before the light of the torches, gleaming upon his figure, disclosed to Mildred the approach of a person of short stature and delicate frame, in whose step there was a singular alertness and rapidity. He wore the blue and buff uniform of the staff, with a pair of epaulets, a buckskin belt, and broadsword. A three cornered cocked-hat, ornamented with a buck tail, gave a peculiar sharpness to his naturally sharp and decided features; and a pair of small, dark eyes twinkled in the firelight, from a countenance originally sallow, but now swarthy from sun and wind. There was a conspicuous alacrity and courtesy in the gay and chivalrous tone in which he accosted Mildred—

‘General Marion, madam, is too happy to have his poor camp honoured by the visit of a lady. They tell me that the Tories were so uncivil as to break in upon your slumbers to-night. It adds greatly to my grudge against them.’

‘I have ventured,’—said Mildred,—‘into the field of war, and it does not become me to complain that I have met its vicissitudes.’

‘Gallantly spoken, madam!—May I be allowed to know to whom I am indebted for the honour of this visit?’—

‘My name is Lindsay:—my father resides at the Dove Cote in Virginia:—under the protection of my brother and a friend, I left home to travel into Carolina.’—

‘A long journey, madam,’—interrupted Marion;—‘and you have been sadly vexed to-night, I learn.—We have a rude and unquiet country.’

‘My sister and myself,’—said Henry,—‘counted the chances before we set out.’

‘I would call you but an inexperienced guide, sir,’—said the general, addressing Henry, and smiling.

‘Oh, as to that,’—replied the youth,—‘we have an old soldier with us—Horse Shoe Robinson—hem—Stephen Foster, I meant to say.’—

'Horse Shoe Robinson!'—exclaimed Marion,—'where is he?'—

'Mr. Henry Lindsay, general, and me,'—said the sergeant, bluntly,—'have been practising a lie to tell the Tories, in case they should take us on awares—but it sticks, you see, in both of our throats.—It's the true fact that I'm Horse Shoe, himself. This calling me Stephen Foster, is only a hanging out of false colours, for the benefit of the red coats and Tories upon occasion.'

'Horse Shoe, good fellow, your hand,'—said Marion, with vivacity,—'I have heard of you before.—Miss Lindsay, excuse me, if you please,—I have business to-night, which is apt, impertinently, to thrust itself between us and our duty to the ladies.—Richards,'—he continued, addressing a young officer who stood near him,—'see if you can find some refreshment that would be acceptable to the lady and her brother. Horse Shoe, this way:—I would speak with you.'—

Marion now retired towards the place where the writing materials were first noticed, and entered into an examination of the sergeant, as to the particulars of the recent attack upon Wingate's cabin.

Before Robinson had finished his narrative of the events of the night, a horseman dashed up almost at full speed to the spot where Marion stood, and flinging himself from his saddle, whilst his horse stood panting beside him, asked for the general.

'How now, Bloody Spur! What's the news?'—demanded Marion.

'The Black river hawks are flying,'—said the soldier.
'I have heard that already,'—interrupted the chieftain.—'Tell me what else.'—

'I staid long enough to secure Wingate's cattle,—and then set out for the river to cut loose the boats at the Ferry. I did it in good time. Four files followed close upon my heels, who had been sent a-head to make sure of the means of crossing.—The fellows found me after my work was done, and chased me good three miles.—They will hardly venture, general, to swim the river to-night, with all the thievery they have in their hands;—

and I rather take it they will halt at the ferry till daylight.'—

'Then that's a lucky cast, Dick Peyton,'—exclaimed Marion.—'Ho, there!—Peters,—wake up that snoring trumpeter.—Tell him to sound 'to saddle.' Come lads, up, up. Gentlemen, to your duties!'

Forthwith the trumpet sounded, and with its notes every thing asleep started erect. Troopers were seen hurrying across the ground in rapid motion: some hastily buckling on broadswords and slinging their muskets; others equipping the horses;—and every where torches were seen passing to and fro in all the agitation of a sudden muster. As soon as Marion had set this mass in action, he repaired to Mildred, and in a manner that betokened no excitement from the general stir around him, he said—

'I owe you an apology, Miss Lindsay, for this desertion, which I am sure you will excuse when you know that it is caused by my desire to punish the varlets, who were so ill-mannered as to intrude upon your slumbers. I hope, however, you will not be a loser by the withdrawal of our people, as I will take measures to put you under the protection of a good friend of mine,—the widow of a worthy soldier,—mistress Rachel Markham,—who lives but two miles from this, and whose hospitable mansion will afford you a shelter more congenial to your wishes than this broad canopy of ours. A guide shall be ready to conduct you.'

'Your kindness, general,'—said Mildred:—'puts me under many obligations.'

'Horse Shoe shall take a line of explanation to my friend,'—added Marion.—'And now, madam, farewell,'—he said, offering his hand.—'And you, master or mister Henry,—I don't know which—you seem entitled to both—good night, my brave lad:—I hope, before long, to hear of your figuring as a gallant soldier of independence.'

'I hope as much myself.'—replied Henry.

Marion withdrew, and by the time that he had prepared the letter, and put it into Horse Shoe's hands, his troops were in line, waiting their order to march. The

general mounted a spirited charger, and galloping to the front of his men, wheeled them into column and, by a rapid movement, soon left Horse Shoe and his little party, attended by one trooper who had been left as a guide, the only tenants of this lately so busy scene. The change seemed almost like enchantment. The fires and many torches were yet burning, but all was still, except the distant murmur of the receding troops—which grew less and less, until, at last, there reigned the silence of the native forest.

Our travellers waited, almost without exchanging a word, absorbed in the contemplation of an incident so novel to Mildred and her brother, until the distant tramp of the cavalry could be no longer heard: then, under the direction of the guide, they set out for the residence of Mrs. Markham.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE day had just begun to dawn as our party, under the guidance of Marion's soldier, were ferried across the Pedee, on the opposite bank of which river lay the estate and mansion of Mrs. Markham. The alarms and excitements of the past night had ceased to stimulate the frame of Mildred, and she now found herself sinking under the most painful weariness. Henry had actually fallen asleep as he sat upon the gunwale of the ferry boat, and rested his head against the sergeant's shoulder: the whole party were overcome with the lassitude that is so distressing, at this hour of dawning, to all persons who have spent the night in watching; and even the sergeant himself,—to the influences of fatigue and privation, the most inaccessible of mortals, and, by fate or fortune, the most unmanageable—occasionally nodded his head, as if answering the calls of man's most welcome visiter. It was, therefore, with more than ordinary contentment that our travellers, when again mounted, were enabled to descry, in the first light of the morning, a group of buildings seated upon an eminence, about a mile distant,

on the farther side of the cultivated lowland that stretched along the southern margin of the river. The guide announced that this was the point of their destination, and the intelligence encouraged the party to accelerate the speed with which they journeyed over the plain. When they arrived at the foot of the hill, the character of the spot they were approaching was more distinctly developed to their view. The mansion, encompassed by a tuft of trees that flung their broad and ancient limbs above its roof, was of the best class of private dwellings, —old and stately in its aspect, and exhibiting all the appendages that characterized the seat of a wealthy proprietor. It was constructed entirely of wood, in accordance with a notion that prevailed at that period, no less than at the present, that a frame structure was best adapted to the character of the climate. It occupied the crest of a hill which commanded a view of the river with its extensive plains; whilst, in turn, it was overlooked by the adjacent tract of country bearing the name of the Cheraw Highlands.

As the party ascended this eminence, Henry, in the eager and thoughtless satisfaction of the moment, put his bugle to his mouth and continued to blow with all his might,—deaf to the remonstrances of his sister, who was endeavouring to explain that there was some want of courtesy in so abrupt a challenge of the hospitality of the family. The blast was interrupted by Horse Shoe's laying his hand upon the instrument, as he gave the indiscreet bugler a short military lecture:

‘You might fetch trouble upon us, mister Henry: this here screeching of horns or trumpets is sometimes a sort of bullying of a garrison; and if an enemy should happen to be on post here—as, God knows, is likely enough in such scampering wars as these,—why you have set the thing past cure:—for it is cutting off all chance of escape, just as much as if the people had been ordered ‘to horse.’ It leaves nothing for us but to brazen it out.’—

An old negro was first startled by the summons, and appeared for a moment at the door of one of the out-buildings, evincing, as he looked down the road upon

the approaching cavalcade, manifest signs of consternation. After a brief glance, he was seen to retreat across the yard to the door of the mansion-house, where he fell to beating at it with as much earnestness as if giving an alarm of fire,—shouting at the same time, ‘Lord bless us, mistress!—here is a whole regiment of sodgers coming to turn every thing topsy-turvy.—Get up, get up—open the door!—

‘Stop your bawling, you stunted black-jack!’—said Robinson, who had galloped up to the spot,—‘and none of your lies.—Is the lady of the house at home?’—

A window was thrown up, at the same moment, in an upper story, and a female head, decorated with a night cap, was thrust out,—whilst a voice, tremulous with affright, inquired what was the cause of this disturbance; but before an answer could be given the head was withdrawn, and the door opening discovered a youth scarcely in appearance over sixteen, with a loose robe thrown around his person and a pistol in his hand.

‘Who comes here, and with what purpose?’—was the question firmly put by the young man.

‘Friends,’—said Horse Shoe—‘sent to the good lady by general Marion.—Sorry, sir, to be the occasion of such a rumpus.—But this here young lady has travelled all night and is most dead with hardships.’—

Mildred, who with the rest of the company had now arrived near the door, was about to speak, when the questioner retired, calling the negro after him into the house. In a moment the servant returned with Mrs. Markham’s compliments to the party, and a request that they would alight.

‘Then, all’s well,’—said Horse Shoe, dismounting, and immediately afterwards lifting Mildred from her saddle—‘a friend in need, madam, is the greatest of God’s blessings. I make no doubt you will find this as snug a nest as you ever flew into in your life.’

‘And, good sergeant, most specially welcome,’—replied Mildred, smiling in the midst of all her pain—‘for in truth I never was so weary.’—

The guide, having now performed his duty, announced that he must return to his corps; and, after a few cheer-

ing words, of kind remembrance from Mildred, coupled with a message of thanks to Marion, he wheeled about and galloped back towards the river. Mildred and Henry entered the house:—and the sergeant, taking command of Isaac, followed the horses towards the stable.

The brother and sister were ushered into an ample parlour comfortably furnished according to the fashion of the wealthier classes of that day; and Mildred, as she threw herself upon a capacious sofa, could not fail to recognize, in the formal portraits that were suspended to the panelled walls, that she was in the dwelling of a family of some pride of name and lineage.

After a short interval, the proprietress of the mansion entered the parlour. She was a lady of a kind and gentle aspect, apparently advanced beyond the middle period of life; and her features, somewhat emaciated, gave a sign of feeble health. She was attired in dishabille, hastily thrown on; and there was some expression of alarm in the unreserved and familiar manner with which she approached Mildred, and inquired into the nature of this early journey.

‘I hope no unhappy accident, my dear, has driven you, at this unusual hour, to my poor house? You are heartily welcome.—I fear to ask what has brought you?’—

‘My brother and myself, madam,’—said Mildred—‘have had a most adventurous night. This letter will explain.—General Marion was so kind as to commit us to your hospitality.’—

The lady took the letter and read it.—

‘Miss Landsay, my child, I am truly happy to serve you. You have had an awful night,—but these times make us acquainted with strange afflictions. This young gentleman your brother, is he your only attendant?’—

Mildred began to communicate the details of her journey, when she was interrupted by her hostess.—

‘I will not trouble you with questions, now, my dear.—You must have sleep—I dread least your health may suffer by this harsh exposure.—After you have had rest, we will talk more, and become better acquainted.—Judith,’—continued the matron, addressing a servant maid, who had just entered the room,—attend this lady to a cham-

ber.—Mister Henry Lindsay—I believe so general I rion calls you—my son Alfred shall take you in char

With these words the good lady left the room and an instant after, returned with the youth who had appeared at the door.—Upon being introduced by mother to the guests, he lost no time in obeying orders in regard to Henry, whom he had conducted of the room at the same moment that Mildred follo the servant towards a chamber.

The entire day was spent by our party in recrui their strength,—towards which needful care the hospit hostess contributed by the tenderest attentions. On following morning Mildred, although refreshed by slumbers of the long interval, still exhibited the trace her recent fatigue, and upon the earnest recommends of Mrs. Markham, seconded by the almost oracular au rity of Horse Shoe,—for the sergeant had greatly upon the respect of his companions by his prudence discretion—she determined to remain another day ir present resting-place.

Mrs. Markham was the widow of a Carolina gentle who had borne the rank of a colonel in the whig tia, and had been actively employed, in the earlier s of the war, in the southern provinces. He had fa in an unfortunate skirmish with some of Prevost's troops, on the Savannah river, some sixteen month fore; and his widow, with three daughters and no male protector than an only son, was now, in season of extreme peril, residing upon a large e which the evil fortune of the times had made the th of an eventful and active desultory war. She been exposed to the most cruel exactions from Tories, to whom her possessions were generally yi up with a passive and helpless submission; and the ness with which, in all her difficulties, she had ad to the cause for which her husband fell, had gained her the generous sympathy of the whig leaders, and than once stimulated them to enterprises, in her b that were followed by severe chastisement upon enemies. These circumstances had given exte notoriety to her name, and drawn largely upon h observation of both friend and foe. To Marion,

hovered upon this border, more like a goblin spectre to his enemies, than a champion whose footsteps might be tracked,—her protection had become a subject of peculiar interest; and the indefatigable soldier frequently started up in her neighbourhood, when danger was at hand, with a mysterious form of opposition that equally defied the calculations of Whigs and Tories.

The lady was still in her mourning weeds, and grief and care had thrown a pallor upon her cheek; but the watchfulness imposed upon her by the emergencies of the day, her familiarity with alarms, and the necessity for constant foresight and decisive action, had infused a certain hardihood into her character, that is seldom believed to be,—but yet, in the hour of trial, unerringly exhibits itself—an attribute of the female bosom. Her manners were considerate, kind, and fraught with dignity. She was the personation of a class of matrons that,—for the honour of our country and of the human race,—was not small in its numbers nor, upon trial, unworthy of its fame—in the sad history of the sufferings of Carolina.

The evening of the day on which Mildred arrived at the mansion brought rumours of a brilliant exploit achieved by Marion; and more circumstantial accounts, on the following morning, confirmed the good tidings. The alert partisan had fallen upon the track of the free-booters who had been marauding on the confines of North Carolina, and whose incursion had expelled our travellers from Wingate's cabin. Marion had overtaken them before sunrise, on the bank of the Pedee, where they had been detained by reason of Peyton's successful removal of the boats. A short but most decisive combat was the consequence, and victory, as she was wont, had seated herself upon Marion's banner. The chieftain and his followers had, as usual, disappeared, and the whole country was in a state of agitation and dread,—the one side fearing a repetition of the blow in some unlooked-for quarter,—the other alarmed by the expectation of quick and bloody reprisal.

These events still more contributed to fortify Mildred's resolution to remain another day under the shelter of

Mrs. Markham's friendly roof, before she would venture forth in the further prosecution of her journey.

Here, for the present, we must leave her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OCCURRENCES AT MUSGROVE'S MILL.

She passed by stealth the narrow door,
The postern way also,
And thought each bush her robe that tore,
The grasp of a warding foe.—*Joanna Baillie.*

THE month of September was more than half gone. The night had just set in, and the waxing moon shone forth from a clear heaven, flinging her rays upon the rippling surface of the Ennoree and upon the glossy leaves that bickered in the wind by the banks of the stream, when Mary Musgrove, with wary and stealthy pace, glided along the path, intricate with shrubbery, that led upwards immediately upon the margin of the river. For a full half hour had she toiled along this narrow way since she had stolen past the sentinel near her father's gate. The distance was not a mile—but the anxious maiden, pursued by her own fears, had, more than once, in the fancy that she was followed, stopped in her career and concealed herself in the thick copse-wood, and listened with painful intensity for the footsteps of those whom her imagination had set upon her track. There was, however, no pursuit: it was the prowling fox or the racoon whose leap had disturbed the dry and rotten branches that lay upon the ground; and Mary smiled with faint-heartedness at the illusions of her own mind. She arrived, at last, beneath the brow of a crag that jutted over the stream, and in the shade of one of the angles of the rock, she discerned the figure of a man seated upon the grass.—She paused with a distrustful caution, as she challenged the silent and half-concealed person.

‘Hist, John!—is it you?—For mercy, speak!—Why would you frighten me?—Me, Mary.—Don’t you know

me?'—said the maiden, as she took heart of grace and advanced near enough to put her hand upon John Ramsay's shoulder.—'Powers above!—the man's asleep,'—she added with a laugh.—'Who would have thought I should have caught you napping, John, at such a time as this!'—

'Why, in truth, Mary,'—said John Ramsay, waking up under the touch of his mistress, and rising to his feet—'I deserve to be shot for sleeping on my watch: but I have been so driven from post to pillar for this last fortnight, that it is as much as I can do to keep my eyes open when night comes on.—So Mary, you will forgive me,—and more particularly when I tell you I was dreaming of you—and thought this cursed war was at an end, and that you and I were happy in a house of our own.—I have been waiting for you for upwards of an hour.'

'Ah, John, I don't think I could sleep if it had been my turn to watch for you.'—

'There's the difference,'—replied John,—'betwixt you women and us men:—you are so full of frights and fidgettings and fancyings, that I do verily believe all the sleeping doses in the world, could never make you shut your eyes when any thing is going on that requires watching,—whether it be for a sick friend, or for a piece of scheming. Now, with us, we take a nap on a hard-trotting horse, and fall to snoring up to the very minute that the trumpet wakes us to make a charge.—What news from Butler?'—

'It is all fixed,'—answered Mary,—'to our hearts' content. Lieutenant Macdonald, ever since Cornwallis's letter, allows major Butler greater privileges; and the sentinels are not half so strict as they used to be,—so that I think we may give them the slip. By the gable window that looks out from the garret room, the major will be able to get upon the roof, and that, he thinks, is near enough to the tree for him to risk a leap into its branches;—though I am almost afraid he is mistaken,—for it looks awfully wide for a spring.—He says if you will be ready with the horses an hour before day-light to-morrow, he will try the leap, and join you at the willows above the

mill. Christopher will saddle one of the wagon-horses and lead him to the place.'

'And the sentinel who keeps guard on that side?'—

'Ah, John, that puzzles us,'—said Mary,—'I'm so much afraid that you will be rash. It is in your nature to forget yourself.'

'Tut, girl—don't talk of that. I'll find a way to manage the sentinel. I will steal up to him and take him unawares,—and then seizing him by the throat, give him his choice of a knife in between his ribs, or a handful of guineas in his pocket.'

'Hadn't we better tell him what a good man the major is?'—said Mary, alarmed at the idea of a struggle in which her lover's life might be endangered,—'and try to coax him to take our side?'—

'Ha, ha!'—ejaculated the trooper involuntarily.—'That's a very good woman's thought—but it won't hold out in a campaign. The fellow might happen to have some honesty, and then, away goes our whole scheme. No, no,—blows are the coin that these rascals buy their bread with, and faith, we'll trade with them in the same article.'

'But then, John, you will be in danger?'—

'What of that, girl?—When have I been out of danger? And don't you see, Mary, what good luck I have with it? Never fear me—I will stifle the fellow in the gentlest fashion known in the wars.'

'If it must be so, John, I will say my prayers for you, with more earnestness than I ever said them in my life. As my father says, the God of Israel will stand by our cause:—and when He is for us—what care we who is against us?'—

'You are a good girl, Mary,'—replied John Ramsay, smiling.—'Get back to the house; let major Butler know that you have seen me, and that I will be ready.'

'He is to be at the window,'—said Mary,—'and I am to signify to him that you are prepared, by setting up a plank against the garden fence in a place where he can see it. He is to keep a look-out from the window all night, and when the time comes, you are to flash a little powder on the edge of the woods upon the hill: if he is

ready then, he will show his candle near the window-sill: that, he says, must be a sign for you to come on; and when he sees you he will take the leap.'—

'I understand it,'—said Ramsay.—'Tell Christopher to be sure of the horse.'

'I have a great deal of courage, John, when danger is far off—but when it comes near, I tremble like a poor coward,'—said Mary.—'Does not my hand feel cold?'—

'Your lips are warm, Mary,'—replied John, kissing her,—'and your heart is warm. Now, never flag when it comes to the trial. Every thing depends upon you. We shall be very happy, by-and-by, to talk this thing all over.—How many soldiers are on Macdonald's guard?—Have none left you since I saw you yesterday?'—

'None,'—said Mary:—'one man left the mill two days since.—I think I heard them say he was going to Ninety-six, on business for the lieutenant.'

'Well, well,—it makes but little odds how many are there, so they but sleep soundly.—Our business is more to run than to fight. Mary, my girl, step across to my father's to-morrow, and he will tell you what has become of me. We must get the major out of this country of wolf-traps as fast as we can.'

'I forgot to ask you,'—said the maiden,—'if you had some coarse clothes ready for the major. He must not seem to be what he is.'—

'Trust me for that,'—replied the trooper.—'Christopher has given me a bundle with as fine a dusty suit in it as any miller's boy ever wore; and, besides that, I have a meal bag to throw across the major's saddle:—and as for myself, Mary, there's ploughman in my very looks. We shall cheat all the Tories betwixt this and Catawba.'

'Now, John, before I leave you, I have one favour to ask.'

'And what is that?'—inquired the generous-hearted soldier,—'you know, if I can, I will grant it before it is named.'—

'I would ask as a favour to me,'—said Mary, with earnestness,—'that you will not be too venturesome: the major is a wiser man than you,—so, be governed by him.'

Remember, John, if any ill were to happen to you, it would break my heart.'—

'I am not so fool-hardy, my girl,'—replied Ramsay,—'but, that when there's occasion for it, I can show as clean a pair of heels as any man:—and so, for your sake, you kitten,'—he said, as he put his hands upon her cheeks, and again snatched a kiss,—'I will run to-morrow like a whole troop of devils.—And now, Mary, good night, and God bless you, girl!—it is time you were at home.—Yet, upon second thoughts, I will walk part of the way with you.—So, take my arm and let us begin the retreat.'

'John, I do so fear you may be hurt,'—said the maiden, as they pursued their way along the path, her whole thoughts being absorbed with the danger of the enterprise.—'Be careful when you come near the sentinel to wait until his back is turned. This moon shines bright, and you may easily be seen.'

'But look, girl, the moon has scarcely two hours yet to travel, and, from that circle round it, I shouldn't wonder if we have rain before day-light;—so by the hour we have fixed for the major's escape, it will be dark enough: therefore you may be easy on that score.'

The humble and ardent lovers pursued their way towards the miller's dwelling with slow steps, intently engaged in conversing over the chances of their perilous project, until they arrived at a point beyond which it was not safe for John Ramsay to venture. Here, after many affectionate caresses, and fond adieus, they separated—the maiden to steal to her place of rest, the soldier to hasten back to his horse that awaited him near the scene of the late meeting.

Mary soon arrived at the mill; then sauntering carelessly towards the dwelling house, began, the better to conceal her purpose, to sing a simple air, during which she had wandered up to the garden fence, where she delayed long enough to set up the plank. The small window in the angle of the roof of the cottage looked down upon the spot where she stood; and as she cast her eyes towards this part of the building, she received a recognition from the prisoner, in a low, inarticulate hem!

and a slight waving of the hand, which was sufficiently observable by the light of the taper within.

Matters having gone so far to the maiden's satisfaction, she now retreated into the house.

The reader will perceive from this narrative that Butler's fortunes had greatly improved since we last took leave of him. The messenger despatched to Cornwallis by Williams, had brought back to the Fair Forest—where it will be remembered the vanquishers of Innis had retreated—a more favourable answer than even the republican leader had hoped. The British commander was not ignorant of the capture of Butler, but the circumstances of the trial had not before been communicated to him. Upon the representation of Williams, he had no hesitation to order a respite to be given to the prisoner for such reasonable time as might be necessary for further investigation. This obvious act of justice was more than, in the circumstances of the times, might have been expected from Cornwallis. The cruel and bloody policy which he adopted towards the inhabitants of the Carolinas, immediately after the battle of Camden, showed a tone of personal exacerbation that was scarcely consistent with the lenity displayed towards Butler. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the fear of retaliation upon the young St. Jermyn, of whose fate he might have been informed from officers of his own camp, might have induced him to temporize in the present case, and to grant a suspension of proceedings against the rebel prisoner. The reply to Williams' letter accordingly intimated that, for the present, major Butler should be held in close custody as a prisoner of war,—leaving the determination of the manner in which he was finally to be disposed of, a subject for future consideration.

John Ramsay, after the departure of Horse Shoe Robinson for Virginia, instead of rejoining his regiment, returned to the Fair Forest camp, where he remained with Williams until the answer from Cornwallis was received. The tidings of this answer he undertook to convey to Butler; and he again set out for his father's house. John felt himself now regularly enlisted in the service of the prisoner, and having found means to com-

municate his present employment to general Sumpter, he obtained permission to remain in it as long as his assistance was of value. The service itself was a grateful one to the young trooper: it accorded with the generosity of his character, and gratified his personal pride by the trust-worthiness which it implied:—but more than this, it brought him into opportunities of frequent meeting with Mary Musgrove, who, passionately beloved by the soldier, was not less ardent than he in her efforts to promote the interest of Butler.

The state of the country did not allow John to be seen in day time, and he and Mary had consequently appointed a place of meeting, where in the shades of night they might commune together on the important subjects of their secret conspiracy. Night after night, they accordingly met at this spot, and here all their schemes were contrived. Mary sometimes came to David Ramsay's dwelling, and the old man's counsel was added to that of the lovers. Christopher Shaw and Allen Musgrove were not ignorant of what was in contemplation, but it was a piece of necessary policy that they should appear to be as little connected with the prisoner as possible.—Christopher, therefore, pursued his duties as assistant-quarter-master or purveyor to the little garrison under Macdonald's command, with unabated assiduity.

The plan of Butler's escape was John Ramsay's. He had been anxiously awaiting an opportunity to attempt this enterprise for the last fortnight, but the difficulty of concerting operations with the prisoner had retarded his movement. This difficulty was at last overcome, and, for a few days past, the plan had been arranged. All that was left to be done was to appoint the hour. Christopher Shaw and Mary, alone of the miller's family, were made acquainted with the details. Christopher was to provide a horse and a suitable disguise for Butler, and these were to be ready at a tuft of willows that grew upon the edge of the river some quarter of a mile above the mill, whenever Mary should announce that John was ready to act. Ramsay's horse was to be brought to the same spot. The preparatory signals, already mentioned, were all agreed upon and understood by the parties:—

or was to escape by the roof, and thence by the boughs of a large oak that grew hard by the miller's dwelling. A sentinel was usually posted some fifty paces from this tree, and it was a matter of great perplexity to mine how his vigilance was to be defeated. This difficulty, John resolved, should be overcome by a stern measure: the man was to be silenced, if necessary, by a

John Ramsay was to steal upon him in the dark, if signs of alarm were given, he was to master the sentinel in such a manner as the occasion might require,—being furnished by Butler with a purse of gold, such a form of influence might be necessary.

Such is the outline of the plan by which Butler's disengagement was to be attempted.—

try Musgrove, before she retired to her chamber, it Christopher Shaw and made him acquainted with the appointment of the hour, and then left him to manage his own share of the enterprise. It was now near ten at night, and Christopher, who had charge of Allen Musgrove's stable, in order to avoid the suspicion of being stirring at a later hour, immediately set off to saddle his horse. One of the wagon team, well known in the neighbourhood by the name of Wall Eye, was selected for this service, and being speedily accoutred, was conducted to the willows, where he was tied fast to a tree, to remain during the hour of need. The young miller soon returned, and it was not long afterwards that the household and its many companions were wrapt in the silence of unsuspecting repose.

Butler, at the hour of the customary visit of the watch, went to bed; and, feigning sickness, had been allowed to have a light in his room during the night. His chamber door, also, by special favour, was closed; and the watch advanced without suspicion or distrust from any person. At two o'clock the last sentinels were relieved, and the sentinel had been gone through of inspecting the miller's chamber. To all outward show, Butler was asleep: the door was again shut and all was still. The hour for action now arrived. Butler rose silently from his bed, dressed himself, and, putting his shoes into his stockings, stole in his stocking feet to the little gable

window at the further end of his apartment. Here he remained, gazing out upon the night with fixed attention. The moon had set and the sky was overcast with clouds, adding a fortunate obscurity to the natural darkness of the hour. By still greater good luck, after a few moments the wind began to rise and rain to descend. Every thing seemed to favour the enterprise. The shady form of the sentinel who was stationed on this side of the house, was dimly discerned by Butler through the gloom; and it was with joyful satisfaction that he could perceive the soldier, as the rain fell in larger drops, retreat some distance from his post and take shelter beneath the shrubbery that grew in the garden. At the same moment, a flash upon the hill, which might have been mistaken for summer lightning, announced to him that his faithful comrade was at hand. Desirous to take advantage of the present neglect of the sentinel, and to avoid the possibility of bringing him into conflict with Ramsay, Butler hastily showed his candle at the window, then extinguished it, and throwing himself out upon the roof, scrambled towards the nearest point of the impending branches of the oak. Here, without a moment's pause, he made a fearless leap that flung him amongst the boughs. The darkness prevented him from choosing the most favourable lodgment in the tree, and he fell across a heavy limb with such force as to take away his breath,—receiving, at the same time, a severe contusion in the head. For a brief space he hung almost senseless, and there was reason to apprehend that he would fall in a swoon to the ground; but the occasion braced his sinking strength, and before many minutes he revived sufficiently to make his way to the trunk, by which he descended safely to the earth. He now threw himself on his hands and feet and crept to the garden fence. The rain still increased and fell in a heavy shower. In another instant he surmounted the barrier and betook himself, with his utmost speed, towards the mill, behind which he sought concealment and temporary rest.—

‘Stand,’—said John Ramsay, who had just reached this point on his way to the house,—and now, taken by

surprise, presented a pistol to Butler's breast.—‘One word above your breath and you die. Be silent, and here is gold for you.’—

‘Ramsay,’—said Butler, in a low tone,—‘is it you?’—

‘Your name?’—demanded the trooper, still presenting the pistol.—

‘Butler,’—was the reply.

‘Thanks—thanks—good major, for that word! You have been before me. I thought you would not miss this rain. Is all well?’—

‘Better, much better, than we could have hoped,’—answered Butler.—‘Seeing the sentinel was off his guard, I took time by the forelock, and have saved you trouble.’

‘For God's sake, major, let us not delay here.—Our horses are waiting for us above.’

‘I am ready,’—said Butler, having now put on his shoes.—‘My brave fellow—I owe you more than I can find words to utter:—lead the way.’—

The liberated captive and his gallant comrade, instantly hastened towards the horses, and mounting with a joyful alacrity, soon set forward at a gallop, in the direction leading to David Ramsay's cottage: Here they arrived just as the day began to dawn.

CHAPTER XIX.

▲ MELANCHOLY INCIDENT.

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.—*Scott.*

BRIEF time was taken by the fugitives for refreshment at David Ramsay's dwelling. Here Butler put on the disguise which Christopher Shaw had provided for him. Then arming himself with a pair of pistols which John had appropriated to his use, the trooper himself using a similar precaution, our two adventurers resumed their journey. Their first object was to gain a point,

some seven or eight miles distant, in the direction of the Fair Forest, where John Ramsay had concealed a few troopers that had been furnished him by Williams, to give their aid, if necessary, in securing Butler's escape.

From this point they were to proceed, with all possible despatch, to Williams' camp. However hazardous the experiment of attempting to traverse the country in open day-light, it was deemed still more dangerous to tarry any length of time so near to the scene of their late adventure. Butler and his comrade, therefore, pushed forward with as much expedition as possible, resolved to outrun the fresh pursuit which they had reason to apprehend, upon the discovery which the morning must produce at the miller's habitation.

Soon after sunrise the rain ceased to fall, the clouds dispersed, and a fresh and brilliant morning broke forth upon the heavens. The success of their late exploit, had raised the spirits of the wanderers. A sense of intense delight animated Butler's feelings: a consciousness of liberty once more enjoyed, after hopes deferred and almost despairing captivity, seemed to regenerate him and make him acquainted with emotions he had never felt before. His heart was full of gratitude to his new friend Ramsay, and the expression of it was warm and sincere. Nature had never appeared so lovely to him as now: the whispers of the forest and the murmur of the clear brook fell on his enfranchised ear like the sweetest music: there was melody for him even in the screams of the jay and the harsh notes of the crow: and once when his companion had halted in sight of a buck, that bounded through the wood before him, Butler, apprehensive that John was about to discharge a bullet after the forest-rover, found himself involuntarily pleading the cause of the noble animal:—‘Do not draw your pistol on him, Ramsay,—I pray you: Let him run,—it is liberty,—liberty, good comrade,—and that is sacred.’

Before eight o'clock they had reached the rendezvous. Here they found three troopers who, although armed, were habited in the plain dress of the country, which enabled them to claim the denomination of either Whig or Tory militia, as their occasions might demand. These

men had lain perdue, for some days, in the depth of the forest, impatiently waiting for intelligence from Ramsay.

‘Well Harry Winter,’—said John, laughing,—‘what say you now? I have brought you the miller’s boy at last.—Have I not made my word good?’—

‘Truth, John,’—replied the trooper,—‘there is more stuff in you than we counted on. Macdonald must be a silly crow to let the fox steal his cheese from him so easily.’—

‘You would have come nearer the mark, Harry, if you had called him a sleepy lout, for whilst he was nodding, I took his cake off the griddle. It was fair filching by night, as the major will tell you. But come, lads, here is no time for dallying,—we mustn’t have the grass growing to our horses’ heels, when we have a whole pack of King George’s hounds on our trail. So move boys!’—and saying these words, John led the party forward at a rapid gallop.

They had not gone far before they found themselves upon a road which led through a piece of thin wood, that covered a small tract of marshy ground, the nature of which brought the party into a more compact body as they approached the narrowest point of the defile. At a short distance beyond this impediment the track became broader, where it ascended a hill thickly covered with an undergrowth of bushes.

Our friends had scarcely arrived in the narrow pass before they perceived, on the hill in front of them, a company of some ten or fifteen horse, rapidly advancing towards them. In a moment all conversation was checked, and Harry Winter turning to his companions had barely time to remark—

‘I answer all questions:—be silent, and if asked, swear to the truth of every word I say—steady:—these fellows are Tories.’

As he ceased speaking, the foremost of the strangers had already come up to them.—

‘Where from, and whither do you go?’—asked Harry Winter, with a stern accent.—

‘From below Ninety-Six, and on our road to Fort Granby,’—replied a clownish voice—

'Peace, you knave!'—interrupted one who appeared to be the leader of the party, and whose carriage and demeanour announced him to be an officer;—'by what authority do you undertake to answer a challenge on the highway?—Back, to your place, sir.'—

The rebuked rustic hung his head, as he reined his horse back into the crowd that now thronged the road.

'As we are of the larger party,'—said the same person, addressing himself to Winter—'we have the right to the word. Who are you and whence come you?'—

'We belong to Floyd's new draft,'—replied Winter with great coolness,—'and left Winnsborough yesterday morning.'—

'And where bound?'—

'To Augusta, on business with Brown.'—

'Ah ha!'—exclaimed the officer—'Brown is pinched by the rebels.—It is well you have thought of him.—What have you to say to him?—Do you bear despatches?'—

'Your pardon, sir,—that's a secret.'

'You need not be afraid, good fellow,—we are friends'—

'I can hardly tell you the exact business,'—replied Winter.—'You will meet Floyd himself with a hundred men, before you ride five miles,—I believe we are going to reinforce the garrison.'

'You will be very welcome,'—said the Tory officer;—'Brown will give you a hearty reception, but devilish slim fare;—he is surrounded with hornets.'—

'So much the better,'—replied Winter—'we have a knack at taking the sting out of the hornets, now-a-days.—Good morning, sir. Report us, if you please, to colonel Floyd, when you come across him, and tell him the hour of the day when you met us.'

During this short parley the two parties had become united into a common throng,—completely filling up the road; and the proximity into which they were severally brought, gave rise to various inquiries after news amongst the subordinates on either side. In this press, Butler was startled to observe the eyes of an individual scanning him with a somewhat pointed scrutiny, and it was with an emotion that had well nigh betrayed him, that he re-

cognized in this person, one of Macdonald's soldiers. It was the man whom the lieutenant had despatched, a few days previous, with an errand to the post at Ninety-Six, and who was now returning with this detachment of militia. The soldier was evidently at fault,—for in a moment afterwards Butler could perceive, from his expression of face, that, whatever might have been his first suspicion, it was quieted by another glance. The disguise was so far effectual. But another cause of alarm arose that, for an instant brought Butler into greater jeopardy. The horse, on which the messenger was mounted, was the yoke-fellow of the lean Wall-Eye, and the two beasts had been long accustomed to work side by side in the same wagon. Their mutual recognition, at this critical moment, became distressingly conspicuous. Their noses were brought in contact, and they began to whinny and paw the ground in that intelligible manner, which constitutes one of the forms of expression by which this portion of the brute creation acknowledge their attachments. The presence of mind of John Ramsay saved the explosion which must soon have followed. He spurred his horse between the two noisy and restless animals, and immediately addressed a conversation to the soldier, which for the moment turned his thoughts into another channel.

By this time the conference had terminated, and the two leaders respectively directing their men to move forward, the defile was passed and each party extricated from the other. But no sooner was the separation completed than Butler's brutish steed, Wall-Eye, began to neigh with the most clamorous vociferation, whilst a response was heard in the same tones as pertinaciously reiterated from the retreating companion on the other side of the defile.

'We were in great danger from yonder Tories,'—said Ramsay, addressing Butler—'did you see that one of these fellows rode the mate of the beast you are on? Who could he be?'—

'It was one of Macdonald's men,'—replied Butler—'I knew the fellow the moment we met—but, thank Heaven, this humble dress concealed me.'—

‘Faster, major!’—cried John—‘these cursed horses are calling after each other now. Pray, push forward until we get out of hearing.—How unlucky that Christopher Shaw should have given you one of the wagon cattle?’—

‘Look back, lads!’—exclaimed Winter, with great earnestness—‘there is something wrong,—these fellows are returning.—Whip and spur, or we are overtaken!’—

Macdonald’s soldier, it seems, having his attention drawn to the singular motions of his horse, had become suddenly confirmed in the suspicion, which at the late meeting for a moment rested upon his mind, as to the identity of Butler; and having communicated this thought to the commanding officer, the whole party of the Tory militia had wheeled about to demand a further investigation:—they were now some hundred paces in the rear of the fugitives and were pressing forward at high speed, the officer in the front calling out, at the same time,—

‘Hold!—Rein up and return! We have questions to ask.—Halt—or we shall fire!’—

‘To it boys!’—cried Harry Winter.—‘Your safety is in your legs!’—

And the party pricked onward as fast as they could urge their cavalry along the road. The chase continued for some half hour or more—the little escort of Butler leaving the road and plunging into the recesses of the forest. An occasional pistol-shot was fired during this retreat, but without effect on either side. The tangled character of the ground over which they passed, greatly retarded the pursuit, and before the half hour was spent none but a few of the boldest horsemen of the assailants were found persevering in the chase. Seeing their number diminished, and finding also that the horses of his own comrades were beginning to flag, John Ramsay assumed the command and directed his party to turn about and offer battle to the pursuers. The immediate effect of this movement was to bring the assailants to a halt, which was no sooner witnessed by John, than he shouted,—‘Charge, lads, charge—and the day is ours!—Hack and hew, good fellows:—down with the bloodhounds!’—

This animated exhortation was followed up by a prompt onset in which the brave trooper led the way; and such was the impetuosity of the assault that the enemy, although consisting of twice the number of those who attacked them, were forced to give ground. A sharp skirmish ensued, during which several pistol-shots were discharged on both sides, and some encounters, hand to hand, were sustained with a sturdy resolution; but, at last, our friends succeeded in turning their opponents to flight. The combat had been maintained in that pell-mell form of attack and defence which defied compact or organized resistance; and the individuals of each party had been scattered over the wood for a considerable distance,—so that when the late pursuers were compelled to retreat, each man urged his horse in such a direction as was most favourable to his escape. By degrees, Butler's few companions began to reassemble at that part of the wood where they had made their first stand.

'There is nothing like striking the first blow at the right time,'—said Harry Winter as, with his hat in his hand to allow the air to cool his brow, he rode up to Butler, and halted to gain breath.—'Give me a hot charge on a slow enemy,—and I don't care much about two to one of odds. Thank God that business is cleanly done, and here we are all safe I hope.—Where is John Ramsay?'—he inquired looking around him, and observing that their comrade was not amongst the number assembled.—

'I saw him close at the heels of the runaways,'—said one of the men.—'John has a trick of seeing a scrimmage to the end; and it is an even bet that he is now upon the trail like a fresh hound. The last I noticed of him, was at the crupper of a couple of the rascals that'll engage, before now he has set his mark upon.'—

'Then we must to his assistance!'—exclaimed Butler, eagerly;—and without waiting for further consultation he set off at full speed, in the supposed direction of John Ramsay's pursuit. The rest followed. They had ridden some distance without being able to perceive any traces of their missing companion. Butler called aloud upon Ramsay,—but there was no answer,—and, for some

moments, there was an anxious suspense as the party halted to listen for the sound of the footsteps of the trooper's approach. At length, a horse was seen, far off in the wood, bounding over the turf at a wild and frightened pace;—the saddle was empty and the bridle-rein hung about his feet. On seeing his companions, the excited steed set up a frequent neigh, and, with head and tail erect, coursed immediately up to the group of horsemen. Here he came to a sudden halt, snorting with the terror of his late alarm. There were drops of blood upon the saddle.

‘Gracious Heaven!’—cried Butler,—‘some evil has befallen Ramsay.—Scatter, and search the wood.’—

It was with confused and melancholy earnestness that they all now continued the quest.—After a painful suspense, one of the men was heard to shout to the rest that their lost comrade was found. The summons soon brought the party together. Ramsay, pale and faint, was stretched upon the grass of the forest,—his bosom streaming forth a current of blood. In an instant Butler was seen stooping over him.—

‘Oh, this is a heavy ransom, for my deliverance,’—he said with the deepest anguish, as he raised the trooper's head and laid it on his lap, whilst the blood flowed from the wound.—‘Speak, dear friend, speak!—Great God, I fear this blow is mortal!—Some water, if it can be found—look for it, Winter,—he has fainted from loss of blood.’

Whilst Harry Winter went in search of the necessary refreshment, Butler tore his cravat from his neck and applied it to staunch the wound. The administration of a slight draught of water, after a short interval, sufficiently revived the disabled soldier to enable him to speak. He turned his sickly and almost quenched eye to Butler, as he said—

‘I was foolish to follow so far.—I have it here—here,’—he added in a feeble voice, as he put his hand upon his breast,—‘and it has done my work.—I fought for you, major,—because I was proud to fight for a friend—and because,’—here his voice failed him, as for a moment he closed his eyes and faintly uttered,—‘it is all over—I am dying.’

'Nay, good John,'—said Butler, whilst the tears ran down his cheeks—'It is not so bad as that—you are weak from bleeding—you will be better presently.—Oh God, oh God!'—he muttered to himself,—'I would not have had this to save my own life,—much less as the price of my liberty!'—

'I fought for you'—said the wounded man, again reviving,—'because, Mary wished it.—This will kill Mary,'—he added after a pause.—'She warned me not to be rash—but I could not help it.—Be kind to her, major Butler, and take care of her. Tell her I did not fear to die,—but for her sake—and for the sake of my poor mother. Go to my parents—let them know I thought of them in my last thoughts.'

'John! John!'—exclaimed Butler, unable to give further utterance to his feelings.

The dying trooper lay for some moments silent, and his comrades stood around him in mute grief, and hung their heads to conceal their emotions from each other.—

'In my pocket,'—said Ramsay,—'is a Testament.—Mary gave it to me for a keep-sake.—Take it out.'

Butler drew forth the small volume.

'What shall I do with it?'—he asked, in a mournful whisper.—

'Give it to Mary—back from me.—And this plait of her hair upon my wrist—major, take it and wear it on your own,—it will remind you of my Mary—you will guard her from harm.'—

'Before God, John Ramsay,'—said Butler with solemn fervour—'I promise you, that, while I live, she shall not want.—Your parents, too, shall be my special care.'—

'Then I shall die with easier heart.—Thanks—thanks,—friends, farewell!'—feeblely ejaculated the stricken soldier, whose eye, already glazed with the pangs of death, now glanced upon the attending group, and after a brief but painful interval closed in darkness.—

John Ramsay spake no more, and his short breathing showed that life was fast ebbing in its channel. The audible sobs of Butler, for some moments, were alone heard in the circle, as he sat supporting the head and grasping the hand of his brave comrade.—The struggle was, at last, over—and the gallant spirit of the

generous soldier had fled. Butler took from the wrist the bracelet of Mary's hair, which was now stained with the blood of its late owner,—and, with an earnest vow to redeem his promise, drew it over his own hand.

The scene that followed this melancholy adventure was one of solemn interest. The proximity of the enemy, although defeated, rendered a delay at this spot, in the present circumstances of Butler, exceedingly hazardous; yet he could not entertain the thought of continuing his journey until he had communicated to David Ramsay the distressing tidings of his son's death. The last request of John seemed also to impose this task upon him as a sacred obligation, due to the friendship which had terminated in so disastrous an end. Butler's resolution, therefore, was soon taken. He determined immediately, at all hazards, to make his way back to Ramsay's cottage, and to endeavour to console the afflicted parents under their severe bereavement. Distraining, in his present state of feeling, the disguise that seemed to make him almost a stranger to himself, he threw aside the miller's dress and again appeared in his true character,—resolved manfully to meet what he now believed to be the almost certain result,—a recapture with all its probable consequences. Some of his party, who were acquainted with the localities of their present position, suggested to him that a whig family, of the name of Drummond, resided at no great distance from the scene of the late encounter, and that, by bearing the body to this place, they might secure for it a decent burial. The remains of the trooper were accordingly laid upon a rude litter, and his mourning comrades slowly and sorrowfully wended their way through the forest to the designated habitation. Here they arrived about noon, having traversed a space of more than two miles to gain this asylum.

Drummond was a woodman, and occupied a rude cabin, with a small clearing around it, in the depths of the wilderness, so remote from the highway as to promise as much security from the quest of the enemy, as might be expected from any portion of the region in which he lived. He received his guests with kindness,

and as he was himself acquainted with the family of the deceased, he exhibited a lively sympathy with the mourners around the body.

When Butler now made known his purpose to set out immediately for the habitation of David Ramsay, Winter asked permission to accompany him, but the woodman interposed and recommended that he alone should be permitted to perform that errand, leaving the others to remain with the corpse until his return.

‘It is, before all others, my duty,’—said Butler,—‘and come what may, I will perform it.’

‘Then we will go together,’—added the proprietor of the cabin.—‘It will be wise to wait until the day is a little more spent, and return in the darkness of the night. David Ramsay will come back with us. He would like to see his son before we put him in the ground.’

‘That shall be as you please, friend,’—said Butler,—‘I will be under your guidance.’

An hour or two before sun-down, Butler and his new companion left the cabin and took their route across the woods towards Ramsay’s dwelling, leaving the dead body in charge of the woodman’s family and the three soldiers. The distance they had to travel did not exceed eight miles. The repulse of the Tory party, in the skirmish of the morning, seemed to have induced a belief, on the part of the enemy, that the fugitives had made a successful retreat which was now beyond pursuit, and there were, in consequence, no parties on the road to molest the travellers. Under these circumstances, it was still day-light when they came in view of David Ramsay’s homestead.

CHAPTER XX.

GREAT agitation prevailed at Macdonald’s post, when the morning disclosed the escape of Butler. The lieutenant was conscious that this mischance had exposed him to the risk of a heavy censure, and, as was natural to a man who could not entirely acquit himself of some

neglect in the performance of his duty, his first measures were taken in a spirit of peevish and angry severity.— Small parties were sent out to explore the neighbourhood, with a view to gain intelligence of the direction taken by the fugitive, with orders to bring him in, dead or alive. The sentinels who were on duty during the night, were arrested and subjected to a rigid examination on the events of their watch; the several members of Musgrove's family were also interrogated as to matters touching their own connection with the prisoner. Nothing, however, was gathered from these investigations, that was calculated to cast a suspicion of connivance in Butler's liberation, upon any individual, either of the garrison or of the family. It was only apparent that the prisoner had availed himself of the remissness of the guard and the darkness of the night, to make a bold descent from the window,—and had succeeded by one of those lucky accidents which sometimes baffle the most cautious foresight. The nature of the attempt did not necessarily suppose the aid of an accomplice, and a faint hope was, therefore, entertained that Butler would be found still lurking in the vicinity of the post.

In the course of a few hours, the first parties that had been dispatched in the morning, returned. They could give no account of the prisoner; nor was there any light thrown upon the escape, until about the dinner hour, when a portion of the detachment which had intercepted Butler and his comrades in the morning, arrived at the mill, under the conduct of the soldier whose suspicions had led to the pursuit and skirmish which we have already described. The report of these men left Macdonald no room to doubt the identity of Butler with the person described. A further examination, at the suggestion of the soldier, showed that Wall-Eye, the wagon-horse, was missing; and it now became certain that Butler had been aided by a party of the enemy with whom he must have been in correspondence.— The conclusion was, that, with his means of flight, there could be little doubt of his being, long before the present period of the day, out of the reach of successful pursuit. The scheme was laid to the account

of Horse Shoe Robinson, whose name and adventures were already famous in this district; and it was conjectured that Sumpter was secretly posted in some neighbouring fastness to give his assistance to the enterprise.

With these reflections, Macdonald felt himself obliged to submit to the exigencies of the case,—a point of philosophy which he did not practise without a very visible chagrin and mortification. His men were called together and, after a short, fretful lecture on their neglect, and an injunction to a more soldier-like vigilance in future,—which savoured of the caution of locking the stable after the steed was stolen,—they were dismissed.

About an hour before sun-down, Allen Musgrove and Mary, availing themselves of the confusion and relaxed discipline of the post, occasioned by the events of the morning, set out on horseback for David Ramsay's dwelling, whither they were led by a natural anxiety to learn something of the movements of the fugitives.

It's a pleasure and a happiness, Allen Musgrove,'—said mistress Ramsay, as the miller and his daughter sat down in the cabin,—‘to see you and Mary over here with us at any time, but it's specially so now when we have good news to tell. John and his friend are safe out of reach of Macdonald's men, and,—God be praised! —I hope out of the way of all other harms. We have had soldiers dodging in and out through the day, but not one of them has made any guess what's gone with the major,—and as for John, they don't seem to suspect him to be on the country-side.—It's all Horse Shoe Robinson with them.—They say that none but he could have helped to get the major away, and that general Sumpter was the instigator. Well, I'm sure, they were welcome to that opinion,—for it set them all to looking over towards Broad river, which is as good a direction as we could wish them to travel.’

‘The less you seem to know about it, with any of these inquiring parties, the better, mistress Ramsay,’—said Allen Musgrove,—‘and I would advise you, even here amongst ourselves, to speak lower.—David, what do you hear this evening?’—

'Nothing concerning our runaways since they left us at day-light this morning,'—replied Ramsay.—'I should guess them to be somewhere near upon Fair Forest by this time. You know Williams is outlying upon the upper branches of the river?—It is more like hunted deer, Allen, than christian men, that our poor fellows take to the woods now.—God knows what will come of it!'

'He knows and has appointed it,'—said Musgrove, gravely,—'and will, in his own good time and with such instruments as shall faithfully work his purpose, give the victory to them that have the right. Man, woman and child may perish, and house and home may be burnt over our heads, and the blood of brave men may make the dust of the road red—yes—and the pastures rich as if new laid with manure,—but the will of God shall be done and his providence be accomplished.—The cause of the just shall prevail against the unjust.'

'There were no soldiers,'—inquired Mary, addressing David Ramsay,—'that you have heard of, who followed towards Fair Forest?—I should be sorry if John was to be troubled with persons going after him—because,'—the maiden hesitated an instant,—'because it's unpleasant and disagreeable to be obliged to be riding off the road, through bushes and briars to keep out of the way'—

'If they were not greatly an overmatch, girl,'—interrupted Ramsay—'John wouldn't give himself much trouble upon that account.'

'Oh, Mr. Ramsay,'—said Mary, earnestly,—'I was thinking of that. It's hard to say what John would call an overmatch:—men are so headstrong and venturesome.'

'That's God's own truth, Mary,'—interposed Mrs. Ramsay,—'and what I have always been telling David and John both. But they never heed me, no more than if I was talking to the child in that cradle.'

'I've told John as much myself,'—said Mary, blushing.—

'And he would not heed you either,'—interrupted her father.—'A soldier would have a holiday life of it, if he followed the advice of his mother or his sweetheart.—Daughter,—amongst friends here,—you needn't blush—

we know more of the secrets betwixt you and the trooper lad than you count upon. John's a clever boy, mistress Ramsay, and I think you have reason to brag of him somewhat; and as there's particular good-will between him and my Mary, I'll not stand in the way when the war is over—if God spares us all—and Mary and the lad keep in the same mind,—I'll not stand in the way of a new settlement in the neighbourhood. Mary is a good daughter, well nurtured, and—I don't care to say it to her face—will make a thriving wife.'—

The mother smiled as she replied—'I don't pretend to know the young people's secrets, but I know this—you don't think better of Mary than John does—nor than me neither, perhaps.'

The conversation was interrupted by a knocking at the door, and, in a moment afterwards, Arthur Butler and the woodman entered the apartment.—

'Major Butler—as I am a living woman!'—exclaimed Mrs. Ramsay.—

'Our good friend himself!'—ejaculated Musgrove, with surprise.—'What has turned you back?—And Gabriel Drummond here too!—What has happened?'—

'Where is my son John?'—demanded Ramsay.—'Are you followed?'—

Butler walked up to Mrs. Ramsay, and, as a tear started to his eye, took her by the hand, and stood for a moment unable to speak.—

'Oh, heaven have mercy on me!'—screamed Mary Musgrove, as she threw herself upon a bed,—'something dreadful has happened.'

'For God's sake,—speak what you have to tell!'—said David Ramsay, instantly turning pale.—

'John Ramsay is hurt,'—faintly articulated the mother,—and Mary, rising from the bed, stood beside Butler with a countenance on which was seated the most agonizing attention.—Andy, the hero of the exploit we have heretofore related, also pressed into the presence of the same group, and a death-like silence pervaded the whole party.—

Butler, with an ineffectual effort to recover himself, turned to Drummond, making a sign to him to tell the

object of their melancholy errand, and then flung himself into a chair.

'John Ramsay is dead,'—said the woodman, in a mournful tone.—'Your son, mistress Ramsay, was shot in a fray with the bloody, villainous Tories.—The heartiest curses upon them!'

'Killed, dear madam,'—said Butler, scarce able to articulate,—'killed in my defence.—Would to God the blow had fallen upon my own head!'

'On, no, no, no!'—exclaimed the matron, as a flood of tears rolled down her cheeks, and she endeavoured to wipe them away with her apron.—'It isn't true.—It can't be true.—My poor, dear, brave boy!'

At the same instant Mary Musgrove fell insensible into the arms of her father, where it was some moments before she gave signs of animation. At length, being laid upon the bed, a deep groan escaped her, which was followed by the most piteous wailing.

The scene wrought upon the younger members of the family, who, as well as the domestics, were heard pouring forth deep and loud lamentations, accompanied with reiterated announcements of the death of the soldier.

When this first burst of the general grief was over, David Ramsay arose from his seat and walked across the room to a window, where he stood endeavouring to compose and master his feelings.—At length, facing Butler, he said in a low and tranquil tone—

'John Ramsay, my son—killed—killed in a skirmish?—God is my witness, I expected it! It was his failing to follow his enemy with too hot a hand; and I am to blame, perhaps, that I never checked him in that temper. But he died like a man and a soldier, major Butler,'—he added, firmly.—

'He died in my arms,'—replied Butler—'as bravely as ever soldier closed his life—his last thoughts were fixed upon his parents, and—

'Dead!'—interrupted Ramsay, as if communing with himself, and regardless of Butler's words—'Dead!—He fell doing his duty to his country—that's a consolation. A man cannot die better. If it please God, I hope my end

may be like his. Andrew, my boy, come here. You are now my oldest living son,'—he said, taking the lad's hand and looking him full in the face, as he spoke with a bitter compression of his lips—'I am willing, much as I love you, that the country should have you'—

'No, David, David,'—interrupted the mother, rousing herself from her silent grief—'we have given enough!—no other child of mine shall venture in the war. John! John! John!—my dear boy, my brave son!—how good and kind he was to us all!—and how glad he was to get home to see us,—and how much we made of him'—

'Silence, wife,'—said David Ramsay—'this is no time to hold back from our duty.—Andrew, listen to me:—remember your brother has met his death fighting against these monsters, who hate the very earth that nurses liberty. You are young, boy,—but you can handle a musket—we will not forget your brother's death.'

'Nor the burning of a good house over your head, and a full barn, father—nor the frights they have given my poor mother'—

'Nor the thousands of brave men,'—added the father—'who have poured out their blood to give us a land and laws of our own. My boy, we will remember these—for vengeance'—

'Not for vengeance,'—said Allen Musgrove—'for justice, David. Your enemy should be remembered only to prevent him from doing mischief. The Lord will give him sword and buckler, spear and shield, who stands up for the true cause:—and when it pleases Him to require the sacrifice of life from the faithful servant who fights the battle, he grants patience and courage to meet the trial. Your son was not the man, David, to turn his face away from the work that was before him,—may God receive him and comfort his distressed family!—He was an honest and brave son, David Ramsay?—

'A braver soldier never buckled on broad-sword, Allen Musgrove.'—replied the father—'Yes—I looked for this;—ever since my dwelling was levelled to the ground by these firebrands, I looked for it. John's passion was up then, and I knew the thoughts that ran through his mind. Ever since that day his feelings have been most

bitter; and he has flung himself amongst the Tories, making as little account of them as the mower when he puts his scythe into the grass of the meadows.'—

'God forgive him, David!'—said Musgrave—'and strengthen you and the boy's good mother in this sharp hour of trial. They who draw the sword in passion may stand in fear of the judgment of the sword: it is a fearful thing for sinful man to shed blood for any end but that of lawful war, and at the bidding of his country—God alone is the avenger.'—

Mary had again raised herself from the bed, and at this moment gave vent to her feelings in a loud and bitter lamentation. 'John Ramsay is dead—is dead!'—she exclaimed.—'I cannot believe it.—He that was so true and so warm-hearted—and that every body loved! They could not kill him! Oh, I begged him to keep his foot from danger, and he promised me, for my sake, to be careful. I loved him, father,—I never told you so much before, but I am not ashamed to tell it now before every body,—I loved him better than all the world.—And we had promised each other. It is so hard to lose them that we love!'—she continued sobbing violently. 'He was so brave and so good—and he was so handsome, Mrs. Ramsay, and so dutiful to you and his father—coming home to see you whenever the war would let him.—And walked, and rode, and ran, and fought for his friends, and them that he cared for. He was so thoughtful for your comfort too,'—she added as she threw herself on her knees and rested her head in the lap of the mother, and there paused through a long interval, during which nothing was heard but her own moans mingled with the sighs of the party—'we were to be married after this war was at an end, and thought we should live so happily—but they have murdered him!—Oh they have murdered him!'—and with her hair thrown in disorder over her face, she again gave vent to a flood of tears.

'Mary, daughter!—Shame on you, girl!'—said her father—'Do you forget, in the hour of your affliction, that you have a friend who is able to comfort? There is one who can heal up your sorrows and speak peace to your troubled spirit—if you be not too proud to ask it.

I have taught you, daughter, in all time of tribulation to look to Him for patience and for strength to bear adversity.—Why do you neglect this refuge now?"—

"Our Father,"—said the maiden fervently clasping her hands and lifting up her eyes, now dim with weeping, as she appealed to God in prayer—"who art in heaven—teach us all to say thy will be done.—Take—take—my dear John—Oh my heart will burst and I shall die!"—she uttered, almost overwhelmed with her emotions, as she again buried her face in mistress Ramsay's lap—"I cannot speak!"—

A silence of inexpressible agony prevailed for some moments. This was at length interrupted by the uprising of the full, clear and firm voice of Allen Musgrove, who now broke forth, from the opposite side of the room where he had kneeled before a chair, in an earnest and impressive supplication to the Deity, urged with all that eloquence which naturally flows from deeply-excited feeling. From the solemnity of the occasion, as well as from the habitually religious temper of the family assembled in the little cabin, the words of the prayer fell upon the hearts of those present with a singularly welcome effect,—and, for the moment, brought tranquillity to their feelings.

When the prayer was ended, the grief of the mourners rolled back in its former flood, and burst from Mary Musgrove in the most heart-rending bitterness. Paroxysm followed paroxysm with fearful violence, and these outbreaks were responded to by the mother with scarcely less intensity. All attempts at consolation, on the part of the men, were unavailing; and it was apparent that nothing remained but to let the tide of anguish take its own course.

It was now sometime after night-fall, when Butler and Drummond beckoned Allen Musgrove to leave the room. They retired into the open air in front of the house, where they were immediately joined by David Ramsay.—Here Butler communicated to them the necessity of making immediate arrangements for their return to the woodman's cottage and for the burial of the deceased trooper. His advice was adopted, and it was resolved that Musgrove and Ramsay should accompany the

other two to the spot. Before the consultation was closed, Andy had come into the group; and he was now directed, with all haste, to throw a saddle upon his father's horse.—

'You, Andrew, my son,'—said David Ramsay—'will stay at home and comfort your poor mother, and Mary.— Speak to them, boy, and persuade them to give up their useless lamentations.—It is the will of God,—and we ought not to murmur at it.'

'The burning, father?'—replied the boy, with a sorrowful earnestness,—'and the fighting, and the frights we have had—was all nothing to this—I never felt before how terrible the war was.'

Andy had now gone to equip the horse, and the men returned to the inside of the cabin, where they sat in profound silence. Butler, at length, rose from the door-sill where he had taken his seat, and crossing the room took a position by the bed on which Mary Musgrove had thrown herself, and where she now lay uttering faint and half-smothered moans.

'I have a remembrance for you,'—he said, stooping down and speaking scarce above a whisper in the ear of the maiden—'I promised to deliver it into your hand.— God knows with what pain I perform my office! John enjoined upon me to give you this,'—he continued as he presented to her the little copy of the Testament,—'and to say to you that his last thoughts were given to you and his mother. He loved you, Mary, better than he loved any living creature in this world.—

'He did, he did,'—sobbed forth the girl,—'and I loved him far above family, friends, kinsfolk and all—I wish I were dead by his side.'—

'Take the book,'—said Butler, hardly able to articulate.—'God forever bless you,'—he added after a pause of weeping,—'and bring you comfort! I have promised John Ramsay, that neither you, nor any of his family, shall ever want the service of a friend, while I have life or means to render it. Before Heaven, that pledge shall be redeemed!—Farewell, farewell!—God bless you!'

As Butler uttered these words he grasped the maiden's hand and pressed it fervently to his lips;—then turning

to the mother he addressed some phrase of comfort to her and hastily left the room.—Scarcely a sound was heard from any one, except the low sobbing of the exhausted weepers, and the almost convulsive kisses which Mary imprinted upon the little book that Butler had put in her hand.

Musgrove, Ramsay and the woodman, retired from the apartment at the same moment,—and the horses being ready at the door, the retreating beat of the hoofs upon the turf gave notice to the in-dwellers that the four men had set forward on their journey.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RUSTIC FUNERAL.

How glumly sounds yon dirg'y song;
Night ravens flap the wing.—*Burger's Leonora.*

By eleven o'clock at night, Butler and the party from Ramsay's arrived at the woodman's cabin. Winter and his comrades had been busy in making preparations for the funeral. The body had been laid out upon a table, a sheet was thrown over it, and a pine torch blazed from the chimney wall close by, and flung its broad, red light over the apartment. An elderly female,—the wife of the woodman,—and two or three children sat quietly in the room. The small detachment of troopers loitered around the corpse, walking with stealthy pace across the floor and, now and then, adjusting such matters of detail in the arrangements for the interment as required their attention. A rude coffin, hastily constructed of such materials as were at hand, was deposited near the table. A solemn silence prevailed, which no less consisted with the gloom of the occasion, than with the late hour of the night.

When the newly arrived party had dismounted and entered the apartment, a short salutation, in suppressed tones, was exchanged,—and without further delay the whole company set themselves to the melancholy duty

that was before them. David Ramsay approached the body and, turning the sheet down from the face, stood gazing on the features of his son. There was a settled frown upon his brow that contrasted signally with the composed and tranquil lineaments of the deceased. The father and son presented a strange and remarkable type of life and death—the countenance of the mourner stamped by the agitation of keen, living emotion, and the object mourned bearing the impress of a serene, placid and passionless repose:—the one a vivid picture of misery, the other a quiet image of happy sleep. David Ramsay bent his looks upon the body, for some minutes, without an endeavour to speak, and at last retreated towards the door, striking his hand upon his forehead as he breathed out the ejaculation—‘my son, my son, how willingly would I change places with you this night!’

Allen Musgrove was less agitated by the spectacle, and whilst he surveyed the features of the deceased, his lips were moved with the utterance of a short and almost inaudible prayer. Then turning to Drummond, he inquired.—‘Has the grave been thought of? Who has attended to the preparations?’

‘It has been thought of,’—replied the woodman,—‘I sent two of my people off to dig it before I went with major Butler to see David. We have a grave-yard across in the woods, nigh a mile from this, and I thought it best that John Ramsay should be buried there.’

‘It was kindly thought on by you, Gabriel,’—replied Musgrove.—‘You have your father and others of your family in that spot.—David Ramsay will thank you for it.’—

‘I do, heartily,’—said Ramsay,—‘and will remember it, Gabriel, at another time.’—

‘Let the body be lifted into the coffin,’—said Musgrove.

The order was promptly executed by Harry Winter and the other troopers. In a few minutes afterwards, the rough boards which had been provided to close up the box or coffin were laid in their appropriate places, and Winter had just begun to hammer the nails into them,—when, from the outside of the cabin, was heard a wild and piercing scream, that fell so suddenly upon the ears

of those within as to cause the trooper to drop the hammer from his hand.—In one moment more, Mary Musgrave rushed into the room and fell prostrate upon the floor. She was instantly followed by Andrew.

‘God of heaven!’—exclaimed Butler,—‘here is misery upon misery.—This poor girl’s brain is crazed by her misfortune. This is worst of all!’—

‘Mary, Mary, my child!’—ejaculated Musgrave, as he instantly raised his daughter into his arms.—‘What madness has come upon you, that you should have wandered here, to-night?’—

‘How has this happened, Andrew?’—said David Ramsay,—all speaking in the same breath.

‘When Mary heard,’—replied Andrew, in answer to his father’s question,—‘that you had all come to Gabriel Drummond’s to bury my brother—she couldn’t rest content,—and she prayed so pitifully to come after you, and see him before they put him in the ground, that I thought it right to tell her that I would come with her. And if I hadn’t she would have come by herself,—for she had got upon her horse, before any of us were aware.’—

‘I couldn’t stay at home, father,’—said Mary, reviving and speaking in a firm voice.—‘I should have died with a broken heart.—I couldn’t let you come to put him in the earth, without following after you.—Where is he?—I heard them nailing the coffin—it must be broken open for me to see him!’

These words, uttered with a bitter vehemence, were followed by a quick movement towards the coffin, which was yet unclosed; and the maiden, with more composure than her previous gestures seemed to render it possible for her to acquire, paused before the body with a look of intense sorrow, as the tears fell fast from her eyes.

‘It is true—it is too true—he is dead!—Oh, John, John!’—she exclaimed, as she stooped down and kissed the cold lips,—‘I did not dream of this when we parted last night near the willows.—You did not look as you do now, when I found you asleep under the rock, and when you promised me, John, that you would be careful, and keep yourself from danger,—if it was only to

please me. We were doing our best for you then, major Butler—and here is what it has come to.—No longer than last night he made me the promise.—Oh me,—oh me! how wretched—how miserable I am!”—

‘Daughter, dear,’—said Allen Musgrove,—‘rise up and behave like a brave girl as, you know, I have often told you, you were.—We are born to afflictions—and young as you are, you cannot hope to be free from the common lot. You do yourself harm by this ungoverned grief.—There’s a good and a kind girl!—sit yourself down and calm your feelings.’—

Musgrove took his daughter by the hand and gently conducted her to a seat, where he continued to address her in soothing language,—secretly afraid that the agony of her feelings might work some serious misfortune upon her senses.—

‘You are not angry with me, father,’~~for following you~~ to-night?’—said Mary, for a moment moderating the wildness of her sorrow.

‘No child, no.—I cannot be angry with you; but I fear this long night-ride may do you harm.’—

‘I can but die, father,—and I would not step aside from that.’

‘Recollect yourself, Mary,—your Bible does not teach you to wish for death. It is sinful to rebel under the chastisements of God.—Daughter, I have taught you, in your day of prosperity, the lessons that were to be practised in your time of suffering and trial.—Do not now turn me and my precepts to shame.’—

‘Oh father, forgive me.—It is so hard to lose the best, the dearest’—Here Mary again gave way to emotions which could only relieve themselves in profuse tears.

In the meantime the body was removed to the outside of the cabin, and the coffin was speedily shut up and deposited upon a light wagon-frame, to which two lean horses were already harnessed, and which waited to convey its burden to the grave-yard.

‘All is ready,’—said Winter, stepping quietly into the house and speaking, in a low tone, to Musgrove.—‘We are waiting only for you.’

‘Father,’—said Mary who, on hearing this communication, had sprung to her feet.—‘I must go with you.’

‘My child!—

‘I came all this way through the dark woods on purpose, father,—and it is my right to go with him to his grave:—pray, dear father, do not forbid me. We belonged to each other, and he would be glad to think I was the last that left him—the very last.’—

‘The poor child takes on so,’—said the wife of Drummond, now, for the first time, interposing in the scene,—‘and it seems natural, Mr. Musgrove, that you shouldn’t hinder her. I will go along—and, may be, it will be a comfort to her, to have some woman-kind beside her.—I will take her hand.’—

‘You shall go, Mary,’—said her father,—‘but on the condition that you govern your feelings, and behave with the moderation of a christian woman. Take courage, my child, and show your nurture.’

‘I will, father—I will:—the worst is past—and I can walk quietly to John’s grave,’—replied Mary, as the tears again flowed fast, and her voice was stifled with her sobs.

‘It is a heavy trouble for such a young creature to bear,’—said mistress Drummond, as she stood beside the maiden, waiting for this burst of grief to subside:—‘but this world is full of such sorrows.’

Musgrove now quitted the apartment. He was followed by his daughter and the rest of the inmates, all of whom repaired to the front of the cabin, where they awaited the removal of the body.

A bundle of pine faggots had been provided, and each one of the party was supplied from them with a lighted torch. Some little delay occurred whilst Harry Winter was concluding his arrangements for the funeral.

‘Take your weapons along, boys,’—said the trooper to his comrades, in a whisper.—‘John Ramsay shall have the honours of war:—and mark, you are to bring up the rear,—let the women walk next the wagon. Gabriel Drummond, bring your rifle along—we shall give a volley over the grave.’

The woodman stepped into the cabin and returned

with his firelock. All things being ready, the wagon, under the guidance of a negro who walked at the horses' heads, now moved forward. The whole party formed a procession in couples,—the woodman's wife and Mary being first in the train, the children succeeding them, and the rest following in regular order.

It was an hour after midnight. The road, scarcely discernible, wound through a thick forest, and the procession moved with a slow and heavy step towards its destination. The torches lit up the darkness of the wood with a strong flame, that penetrated the mass of sombre foliage to the extent of some fifty paces around, and glared with a wild and romantic effect upon the rude coffin, the homely vehicle on which it was borne, and upon the sorrowing faces of the train that followed it. The seclusion of the region, the unwonted hour, and the strange mixture of domestic and military mourning,—half rustic and half warlike,—that entered into the composition of the group; and, above all, the manifestation of sincere and intense grief that was seen in every member of the train, communicated to the incident a singularly imaginative and unusual character. No words were spoken, except the few orders of the march announced by Harry Winter in a whisper, and the ear recognized, with a painful precision, the unceasing sobs of Mary Musgrove, and the deep groan that seemed, unawares, to escape now and then from some of the males of the party. The dull tramp of feet, and the rusty creak of the wagon-wheels, or the crackling of brushwood beneath them, and the monotonous clank of the chains employed in the gearing of the horses, all broke upon the stillness of the night with a more abrupt and observed distinctness, from the peculiar tone of feeling which pervaded those who were engaged in the sad offices of the scene.

In the space of half an hour, the train had emerged from the wood upon a small tract of open ground, that seemed to have been formerly cleared from the forest for the purpose of cultivation. Whatever tillage might have once existed there was now abandoned, and the space was overgrown with brambles, through which the

road still struggled by a track that, even in day-it would have been difficult to pursue. Towards centre of this opening grew a cluster of low, cherry peach trees, around whose roots a plentiful stock of scions had shot up in the absence of culture. In the shade of this cluster, a ragged and half-ruined paling formed a square enclosure, of some ten or twelve paces broad,—and a few rude posts set up within, marked the spot to be the rustic grave-yard. Here two bodies were seen resting over a newly dug grave. The wagon halted within some short distance of the grave, and the coffin was now committed to the shoulders of the troopers. Following these, the whole train of mourners entered the burial-place.

The reader will readily imagine with what fresh fervor the grief of poor Mary broke forth, whilst standing on the brink of the pit, in which was to be entombed the remains of one so dear to her.—I will forbear to dwell on it. The solemn interval or pause which intervened, between the arrival of the corpse at this spot, and its being lowered into the ground, was one that was not relieved only by the loud sorrow of her who here took the part of chief mourner,—but all, even to the mourners who stood musing over their spades, gave vent to feelings which, at such a moment, it neither belongs to humanity, nor becomes it, to resist.

The funeral service was performed by Allen Musgrove. The character of the miller, both physical and moral, enhanced his present employment with singular efficacy. Although his frame bore the traces of age, it was still strong and muscular; and his bearing, erect and steadfast, betokened firmness of mind. His head partially bald, was uncovered, and his loose, whitened locks played in the breeze. The torches were raised above the group; as they flared in the wind and flung their heavy masses of smoke into the air, they threw also a blaze of light upon the venerable figure of the miller, as he uttered an impassioned supplication to the Deity,—which, according to the habit of thinking of that period, conformably also to the tenets of the religious sect to which the speaker belonged, might be said to have ex-

pressed, in an equal degree, resignation to the will of Heaven and defiance of the power of man. Though the office at the grave was thus prolonged, it did not seem to be unexpected or wearisome to the auditory, who remained with unabated interest until they had chanted a hymn, which was given out by the miller, and sung in successive couplets. The religious observances of the place seemed to have taken a profitable hold upon the hearts of the inourners, and, before the hymn was concluded, even the voice of Mary Musgrove rose with a clear cadence upon the air, and showed that the inspirations of piety had already supplanted some of the more violent paroxysms of grief.

This exercise of devotion being finished, the greater part of the company began their retreat to the woodman's cabin. Winter and his comrades remained to perform the useless and idle ceremony of discharging their pistols over the grave, and when this was accomplished they hurried forward to overtake the party in advance.

They had scarcely rejoined their companions, before the horses of the wagon were seized by an unknown hand,—and the glare of the torches presented to the view of the company, some fifteen or twenty files of British troopers.—

‘Stand—I charge you all, in the name of the king!’—called out an authoritative voice from the contiguous thicket,—and, before another word could be uttered, the funeral train found themselves surrounded by enemies.—

‘Hands off!’—exclaimed Butler, as a soldier had seized him by the coat.—A pistol shot was heard and Butler was seen plunging into the wood, followed by Winter and one or two others.—

The fugitives were pursued by numbers of the hostile party, and in a few moments were dragged back to the lights.

‘Who are you, sir?’—demanded an officer who now rode up to Butler—‘that you dare to disobey a command in the name of the king?’—Friend or foe, you must submit to be questioned.’

‘We have been engaged,’—said Allen Musgrove—‘in the peaceful and christian duty of burying the dead.—What right have you to interrupt us?’—

‘You take a strange hour for such a work,’—replied the officer—‘and, by the volley fired over the grave, I doubt whether your service be so peaceful as you pretend, old man. What is he that you have laid beneath the turf to-night?’—

‘A soldier,’—replied Butler—‘worthy of all the rites that belong to the sepulture of a brave man.’

‘And you are a comrade, I suppose?’

‘I do not deny it.’

‘What colours do you serve?’

‘Who is he that asks?’

‘Captain M’Alpine of the new levies,’—replied the officer.—‘Now, sir,—your name and character?—you must be convinced of my right to know it.’

‘I have no motive for concealment,’—said Butler,—since I am already in your power.—Myself and four comrades are strictly your prisoners—the rest of this party are inhabitants of the neighbouring country, having no connection with the war, but led hither by a simple wish to perform an office of humanity to a deceased friend.—In surrendering myself and those under my command, I bespeak for the others an immunity from all vexatious detention. I am an officer of the continental service:—Butler is my name,—my rank, a major of infantry.’—

After a few words more of explanation, the party were directed by the British officer to continue their march to Drummond’s cabin, whither, in a brief space, they arrived under the escort of their captors.

A wakeful night was passed under the woodman’s roof; and when morning came the circumstances of the recapture of Butler were more fully disclosed. The detachment under captain M’Alpine, were on their way to join Ferguson, who was now posted in the upper district,—and being attracted by the sound of voices engaged in chanting the psalm at the funeral of John Ramsay, and still more by the discharge of the volley over the grave, they had directed their march to the spot, which they had no difficulty in reaching by the help of the torches borne by the mourners.

The detachment consisted of a company of horse,

numbering some fifty men,—who had no scruple in seizing upon Butler and his companions as prisoners of war. It was some relief to Butler, when he ascertained that his present captors were ignorant of his previous history, and were unconnected with those who had formerly held him in custody. He was also gratified with the assurance that no design was entertained to molest any others of the party, except those whom Butler himself indicated as belligerents.

Captain M'Alpine halted with his men at the woodman's cabin, until after sunrise. During this interval, Butler was enabled to prepare himself for the journey he was about to commence, and to take an affectionate leave of Musgrove and his daughter, David Ramsay and the woodman's family.

Allen Musgrove and Mary and their friend Ramsay, deemed it prudent to retreat with the first permission given them by the British officer. And, not long afterwards, Butler and his comrades found themselves in the escort of the tory cavalry, bound for Ferguson's camp.

Thus, once more was Butler doomed to feel the vexations of captivity.

CHAPTER XXII.

A COUNCIL OF WAR AT MRS. MARKHAM'S.—THE SERGEANT SETS FORTH ON AN ADVENTURE.

We return to Mildred Lindsay, who, comfortably sheltered under the roof of Mrs. Markham, had found herself, after the repose of forty-eight hours, almost entirely reinstated in her former strength; her thoughts were now consequently directed to the resumption of her journey. The gentle and assiduous attentions of the family whose hospitality she enjoyed, were, however, not confined to the mere restoration of her health. The peculiarity of her condition,—thus thrown as she was amongst strangers, in the prosecution of an enterprise, which, though its purpose was not disclosed to her entertainer, was one manifestly of great peril, and such only as could have

been induced by some urgent and imperious necessity,—awakened in Mrs. Markham, a lively interest towards Mildred's future progress. This interest was increased by the deportment of our heroine herself, whose mild and graceful courtesy, feminine delicacy and gentleness of nurture were so signally contrasted with the romantic hardihood of her present expedition. General Marion's letter, also, in the estimation of the hostess put her under a special obligation to look after the welfare of her guest. Accordingly, now when the third morning of our travellers' sojourn had arrived, and Mildred thought of taking leave of the friendly family, the first announcement of this purpose was met by an almost positive prohibition.

'You are young, my dear,'—said the matron,—'in your experience of the horrors of this civil war, and make a sad mistake if you think that your sex, or any sufficient reason you may have to justify yourself in going on, will protect you against insult, in case you should be so unfortunate as to meet parties of the enemy.'

'My object, madam,'—replied Mildred,—'is to go into the very heart of the enemy's ranks.—My business is to see lord Cornwallis himself.—I shall, therefore, proceed directly to his head-quarters. That being my purpose, I shall not regret the opportunity to throw myself upon the protection of the first band of royal troops I may meet.'

'Into lord Cornwallis's presence?'—said Mrs. Markham, with an expression of wonder.—'You have some very near friend who has suffered in the late battle—a prisoner, perhaps?'—As this question escaped the lips of the lady, who had heretofore purposely forbore to inquire into the private motive of Mildred's journey, she shook her head distrustfully, and, after some deliberation, added—'You will pardon me, my child, for what may seem to be an idle curiosity—I seek to know nothing that you may desire to keep secret—but your journey is so full of hazard to one so young and helpless as yourself, that I fear you have not wisely considered the evil chances to which you may be exposed.'

'I have spent no thought upon the hazard, madam,'—replied Mildred.—'There is no degree of danger that

should outweigh my resolution. You guess truly—I have a friend who is a prisoner, and in sad jeopardy—and, more than that, dear madam, I have persuaded myself that I have power to save him.'—A tear started in her eye as she added.—'That is all I have thought of.'

'Then may a kind and merciful heaven shield you!—They little know the heart-breaking trials of war, who have not felt them as I have. These rude soldiers, Miss Lindsay,—I shudder at the thought of your trusting your safety to them.'—

'My name, madam,'—replied Mildred,—'I am ashamed to tell you, has all its associations on their side—I must trust to its power to bear me through.'—

'Not all, sister,'—interrupted Henry.—'From the beginning,'up to this day, I can answer for myself, I have never had a thought that didn't take sides against the red coats.'

A faint smile played upon Mrs. Markham's features, as she turned to Henry and said—'You are a young rebel, and a warm one, I perceive. Such troubles as ours require grave advisers.'

'My brother and myself must not be misapprehended,'—continued Mildred,—'I alluded only to my father's influence.—I have heard that he enjoys some consideration in the esteem of lord Cornwallis—and it is upon the strength of that I have ventured.—Besides, I am well attended by a careful and wise soldier, who rides as my companion and guide,—one who would not quietly see me harmed.'

'Let him be brought into our consultation,'—said Mrs. Markham.—'I would not act without his advice. With your leave, I will send for him.'—

Henry and Alfred Markham, immediately upon this hint, went in pursuit of Horse Shoe.

When that important and trusty personage arrived in the parlour, a regular conference was opened, which, after a few discourses on the general aspect of affairs,—wherein the sergeant showed an abundance of soldierly sagacity and knowledge, and a still greater share of warm and faithful concern for the welfare of the sister and brother whom he had in ward,—resulted in the con-

clusion that measures should be taken to ascertain the state of the country around, in reference to the impression made by the late movements of Marion and his adversary; and, especially, what character of troops occupied the region over which the sergeant would be required to conduct his charge.—This duty, the sergeant very appropriately considered as belonging to himself, and he therefore determined forthwith to set out on a reconnoitring expedition. As we propose to bear him company, we will, for the present, leave the family in the parlour to the enjoyment of the kind communion that had already nursed up a mutual affection between the hostess and her guests.

The sergeant took his departure alone, notwithstanding the urgent importunity of Henry and his new companion, Alfred Markham, for permission to accompany him—a request that was utterly denied by the sturdy and cautious soldier.—

‘You are apt to talk too much, mister Lindsay,’—he said, in answer to the petition of the young men,—‘for such a piece of business as I have in hand:—for although, consarning of your good sense, and valour both, considering your years, I would not be thought to speak rashly against them,—but, on the contrary, to give you full praise and recommendation,—yet, you know, you want experience and use to these double-dealings and dodgings that the war puts us to;—whereupon, you mought fall to talking when it was best to be silent,—and, in case of our meeting a body, to be letting out somewhat too much,—which is a thing that discommodes in war more than you would believe. And besides this, master Henry, there mought be, mayhap, a scrimmage, a chase and what not,—in which consideration you would only be in my way, seeing that I should be obliged to be thinking of you when all my wits would be wanting for myself.—No, no,—upon no account is it reasonable that you should be along. It is your business to sarve as a body-guard to our young lady—who, I say, may God bless and take care of in this world and the next!—And so, mister Henry, you have my orders to stick to your post.’

'Well, sergeant,'—replied Henry,—'I must obey orders, and if you command me to stay behind, why I can't choose about it. But, sergeant, let me give you a word of advice.—Ride cautiously—keep your eyes to the right and left, as well as straight before you—and don't let them catch you napping.'

'You studied that speech, mister Henry?'—said Horse Shoe, laughing.—'To hear you, one mought almost think you had shaved a beard from your chin before this.—Look out, or your hair will turn grey from too hard thinking!'—and now, my long headed fellow-sodger, good bye t'ye!—

'You are not going without your rifle, Mr. Horse Shoe?'—said Henry, calling out to the sergeant, who had already trotted off some twenty paces.—

'That's another consarn for you to ruminate over,'—replied Horse Shoe, in the same jocular mood.—'Mine is a business of legs, not arms, to-day.'

The sergeant was immediately after this upon the highway, moving forward with nothing, seemingly, to employ him but cheerful thoughts.

After riding for an hour upon the road that led towards Camden, he was enabled to collect from the country people a rumour that some detachments of horse were, at this time, traversing the country towards Pedee,—but whether friends or enemies was not known to his informants. In following up this trail of common report, his vigilance quickened by the uncertainty of the tidings, he arrived about mid-day at a brook which, running between low but sharp hills, was crossed by the road at a point where a bold mass of rock, some twenty feet in height, jutted down with a perpendicular abruptness into the water. Here, as he stopped to survey the narrow and winding course of the stream, his eye was attracted by the projecting crag that thrust its bulk almost into the middle of the channel; and, for a moment, he indulged the speculation of a soldier, as he pondered upon the military advantages of such a post, either as a point from which to reconnoitre an enemy, or as a vantage-ground on which to dispute his passage of the ford. It, not long

afterwards, fell to his lot to turn this observation to some account.

A mile beyond this spot and where the road, as it yet crept through the bosom of the hills, was so obscured by forest as to afford not more than fifty paces of uninterrupted view, his quick ear was struck with sounds resembling the tramp of horses. Upon this conviction, it was but the action of an instant for him to turn aside into the woods and to take a station which might enable him to investigate the cause of his surmise, without exposing himself to the risk of detection. The noise grew louder—and what was vague conjecture soon became the certain report of his senses. At the nearest turn in the road, whilst protected by a screen of thicket, he could descry the leading platoons of a column of horse advancing at a slow gait; and upon examining his own position he became aware that, although the thicket might guard him from present observation, it would cease to do so as soon as the squadron should approach nearer to his ground. His thoughts recurred to the rock at the ford,—and, with a view to avail himself of it, he forthwith commenced his retreat, through the underwood that guarded the road side, as fast as captain Peter could get over the ground. It was not long before he was removed beyond all risk of being seen by the advancing party, and he thus found himself at liberty to take the road again and retire without apprehension.

In Horse Shoe's reckoning, it was a matter of great importance that he should obtain the most accurate information regarding the troop that he had just encountered; and his present purpose was, accordingly, to post himself in a secure position upon the rock, and there maintain a close watch upon the party as they rode beneath it. The brook was gained, the ford passed, and the sergeant, after riding a short circuit towards the rear of the little promontory, dismounted from his horse, which he secured in the depths of the wood, and then clambered to the top of the precipice,—where he had barely time to conceal himself amongst the crags and the thick shrubbery

that shot up above them, before the headmost files of the cavalry appeared descending the opposite hill.

As the column came gradually into his view upon the road which wound down into the valley, it disclosed a troop of some twenty men, whose green uniform sufficiently indicated the presence of a part of Tarleton's command. He heard them call a halt upon the bank, and after a few moment's rest, he saw them ride into the stream, and pass in regular files around the base of the rock.

The passage of the brook occupied some time; for the thirsty horses were successively given a slack rein as they entered the ford, and were allowed to drink. This delay separated the platoons,—and those who first passed over had advanced a considerable distance before the stragglers of the rear had quitted the stream. For some minutes that stir and noise prevailed which, in a military party, generally attends the attempt to restore order amongst confused or broken ranks. The frequent commands of officers summoning the loiterers and chiding their delay,—were given from front to rear in loud tones, and the swift gallop of those who had lingered in the stream, as they obeyed the order and hastened forward to their places, sent forth a quick and spirited evidence of bustle, that broke sharply upon the silence of the surrounding forest. These indications of activity unfortunately pricked, with a sudden astonishment, the ear of one who has heretofore figured, not without renown, in this history,—the lusty and faithful Captain Peter,—who, not sufficiently alive to the distinction between friend and foe, now began to snuff, and paw the ground, and then, with a long and clear note of recognition, to express his feelings of good fellowship towards the unseen strangers. Another moment,—and the gay and thoughtless steed reared, plunged, broke his bridle, and bounded through the woods, with a frolicsome speed that brought him into the midst of the troop, where he wheeled up and took his place, like a disciplined charger, on the flank of one of the platoons.

This incident caused the officer in command of the party to come again to a halt, and to despatch a portion

of his men to seek the owner of the horse. An eager search commenced, which was almost immediately terminated by the wary sergeant presenting himself to the view of the troop, on a prominent and exposed point of the rock, where he seemed to be busily and unconcernedly engaged with his jack-knife, in stripping the bark from the roots of a sassafras tree that grew out of one of the fissures of the cliff. Apparently, he gave no attention to the clamour around him, nor seemed to show a wish to conceal himself from notice.

‘Who in the devil are you—and what are you about?’—exclaimed the leading soldier, as he mounted the rock and came up immediately behind Robinson, who was still fixed with one knee upon the ground, plying his labour at the root of the tree.—

‘Good day, friend,’—said Robinson, looking up over his shoulder,—‘Good day!—From your looks you belong to the army,—and, if that’s true, perhaps you mought be able to tell me how far it is from here to the river?’

‘Get up on your feet,’—said the other,—‘and follow me:—quickly! I will take you to one who will oil the joints of your tongue for you, and put you to studying your catechism. Quick, fellow,—move your heavy carcass,—or, I promise you, I will prick your fat sides with my sword point.’—

‘Any where you wish,—sir,—if you will only give me time to gather up this here bark,’—said the sergeant, who, hereupon, heedless of the objurgation of the trooper, deliberately untied the handkerchief from his neck,—and, spreading it out upon the ground, threw into it the pieces of bark he had been cutting, and then, taking it in his hand, rose and walked after the soldier.

He was conducted to the troop, who were waiting in the road the return of the men that had been despatched on this piece of service.

‘Quick,—quick—move yourselves!—we have no time to lose,’—cried out the officer in command of the detachment, as Horse Shoe and his guide came in view:—and then, after an interval of silence, during which the sergeant walked heavily to the spot where the troop waited for him, he added with an impatient abruptness,—‘Make

few words of it, sir.—Your name,—where from,—and where are you going?”—

“My name, captain—if your honour is a captain,—and if I miscall you—I ax your honour’s pardon:—my name is—is—Stephen Foster—Steve most commonly.”—

“Well—whence do you come?”—

“From Virginny.”—

“Fool!—why do you stop?”—

“You axed, I think, where I was going?—I was going to get on my horse that’s broke his bridle, which I see you have cotched for me:—and then back to my young mistress, sir—that was taken sick over here at a gentlewoman’s house on Pedee. She thought a little sassafras tea might holp her along, and I was sent out to try and get a few scrapings of the bark to take to her. I suppose I must have rode out of my way a matter of some eight or ten miles to find it—though I told her that I thought a little balm out of the garden would have done just as well. But women are women, sir,—and a sick woman in particular.”

“This fellow is more knave than fool, I take it, cornet,”—said the officer to a companion near him.—

“His horse seems to have been trained to other duties than gathering herbs for ladies of delicate stomachs,”—replied the other.

“My horse,”—interrupted the sergeant,—“would have broke clean off if it hadn’t a been for your honour:—they say he belonged to a muster in Virginny,—and I was warned that he was apt to get rampagious when there was any thing like a set of sodgers nigh him—and that is about the reason, I expect, why he took it into his head to fall into your company.”

“Get on your beast,”—said the officer impatiently,—“you must go with us. If upon further acquaintance I form a better opinion of you, you may go about your business.”

“I am somewhat in a hurry to get back to the lady.”—

“Silence!—Mount your horse,—fall to the rear.—Gilbert, attend to this fellow—he mustn’t leave us,”—said the officer, as he delivered Horse Shoe into the charge of one of the leaders of a platoon, and then put spurs to his steed and moved to the head of the column.

It was in the afternoon, when this incident occurred; and Robinson found himself, during the remainder of the day, compelled to follow the troop through a series of by-ways, across the country in a direction of which he was wholly ignorant,—being also in the same degree unacquainted with the object of the march. When the day closed they arrived at a farm house, where it seemed to be their purpose to pass the night; and here the sergeant, towards whom no unnecessary rigour had been exercised, was freely allowed to participate in the cheer provided for the party. This rest was of short duration,—for, before the coming of the allotted bed-hour, a courier arrived, bringing a despatch to the leader of the detachment, which produced an instant order to saddle and resume the march.

Once more upon the road, the sergeant became aware, as well as he was able to determine in the dark, that the party during the night were retracing their steps, and returning upon the same route which they had before travelled.

A half hour before the dawn found the troop ascending a long hill, the summit of which, as Robinson perceived from the rustling of the blades in the morning wind, was covered by a field of standing corn; and he was enabled to descry, moving athwart the star-lit sky, the figures of men on horse-back approaching the column. The customary challenge was given; a momentary halt ensued, and he could hear the patrole,—for such they described themselves,—informing the officer of the detachment, that colonel Tarleton was close at hand expecting their arrival. This intelligence induced an increase of speed which, after a short interval, brought the night-worn squadron into the presence of nearly a whole regiment of cavalry.

The troops, thus encountered, were stationed upon the high-road where it crossed an open and uncultivated plain, the nearer extremity of which was bordered by the corn-field of which I have spoken. It was apparent that the regiment had passed the night at this place, as a number of horses were yet attached to the fence that guarded the field, and were feeding on the blades of corn that had

been gathered and thrown before them. The gr^o part, however, were now drawn up in column of m^{en} as if but recently arrayed to prepare for the toil of coming day.

Robinson was conducted along the flank of the col^{on} and thence to a spot in the neighbourhood, where a p^{arty} of officers assembled by a sylvan tent, constructed of the boughs of trees, showed him that he was at the headquarters of the commander of the corps. This tent pitched upon a piece of high ground that afforded a view of the distant horizon in the east, where a faint streak of day-light lay like the traces of a far-off town in flame, against which the forms of men and horses were relief in bold profile, as they now moved about in the preparations for their march.

A single faggot gleamed within the tent, and, by its light, Horse Shoe was enabled to discern the well-known figure of Tarleton, as he conferred with a company of officers around him. After the sergeant had waited a few moments, he was ordered into the presence of the general within:

‘You were found yesterday,’—said Tarleton,—‘suspicious circumstances:—what is your name, low?’—

‘I am called Stephen Foster by name,’—replied the sergeant,—‘being a stranger in these parts. At home a kind of a gardener to a gentleman in Virginny—a man is n’t long since I set out with his daughter, to cross the mountains and come here into Carolina. She fell sick by the way,—and yesterday, whilst I was hunting up a little physic for her in the woods, a gang of your people came across me and fotch me here:—and that’s about all, that I have got to say.’

A series of questions followed, by which the sergeant was compelled to give some further account of himself, which he contrived to do with an address that left the questioners but little the wiser as to his real character, and which strongly impressed them with the conviction that the man they had to deal with was but a simple, rude clown.

'You say, you don't know the name of the person at whose house you stopped?'—inquired the commander.

'I disremember,'—replied Horse Shoe:—'being, as I said, a stranger in the parts, and not liking to make too free with axing after people's names.'—

'A precious lout, this, you have brought me, lieutenant Munroe,'—said Tarleton, addressing the officer who had hitherto had the custody of the sergeant.—'You don't *disremember* the part of Virginia you lived in?'—he added, pursuing his examination.—

'They have given it the name of Albermarle,'—replied Horse Shoe.

'And the father of Miss Lindsay, you say, resided there?'—

'Sartainly, sir.'

'There is a gentleman of that name somewhere in Virginia,'—said Tarleton, apart to one of his attendants,—'and known as a friend to our cause, I think.'—

'I have heard of the family,'—replied the person addressed.

'What has brought the lady to Carolina?'—

'Consarning some business of a friend, as I have been told,'—answered Horse Shoe.

'It is a strange errand for such a time,—and a marvellous shrewd conductor she has chosen!—I can make nothing out of this fellow. You might have saved yourself the trouble of taking charge of such a clod, lieutenant.'—

'My orders,'—replied the lieutenant,—'were to arrest all suspicious persons;—and I had two reasons to suspect this man. First, he was found upon a spot that couldn't have been better chosen for a look-out if he had been sent to reconnoitre us;—and second, his horse showed some military training.'—

'But the booby himself was stupid enough,'—rejoined the commander,—'to carry his passport in his face.'

'I have a paper, sir, to that purpose,'—said Horse Shoe, putting his hand into his pockets,—'it signifies, I was told,—for I can't read of my own accord—that I mought pass free without molestification from the sodgers of the king—this is it, I believe, sir.'—

'To three suppers at the Rising Sun,—four and six

pence,'—said Tarleton, reading.—'Tush, this is a tavern bill!'

‘Ha, ha,—so it is,’—exclaimed Robinson.—‘Well, I have been keeping that there paper for a week past, thinking it was my certificate—and, like a fool, I have gone and tore up the t’other.’

‘We are wasting time, gentlemen,’—said the commander.—‘Turn this fellow loose, and let him go his ways. But hark you, Mr. Numskull,—did you hear of a fight lately on Pedee, between some of our people and Marion—three days ago?’—

‘They talked of such a thing on the river,’—replied Horse Shoe.

‘Well, and what was said?’

‘Nothing in particular that I can bear in mind.’

‘Like all the rest we have tried to get out of him!—You don’t even know which party got the better?’—

‘Oh, I have hearn that, sir.’—

‘What did you hear?—speak out!’—

‘Shall I give you the circumlocutory account of the matter?’—asked Horse Shoe,—‘or did you wish me to go into the particulars?’—

‘Any account, so that it be short.’—

‘Then I have hearn that Marion gave the t’other side a bit of a beating.’—

‘Aye—aye—so I suppose!—Another tale of this Jack the Giant Killer!—And what has become of Marion?’—

‘That’s onbeknowns to me,’—replied Horse Shoe.

‘Do you remember the fool we met at the Waxhaws, last May?’—asked one of the officers present, of another. ‘This fellow might pass for a full brother in blood—only I think this clown has the less wit of the two.’—

‘As heavy a lump, certainly,’—replied the officer.—‘This, you say, is the first time you have been in Carolina?’—

‘To my knowledge,’—replied the sergeant.

‘It is broad day, gentlemen,’—said Tarleton,—‘we have been squandering precious time upon an empty simpleton.—Give him his beast and let him be gone.—Sirrah, you are free to depart.—But, look you—if I hear any reports along the road of your having seen me,—or a

word about my coming, I'll ferret you out and have you trussed upon a stake twenty foot long?—

'Thank your honour,'—said Horse Shoe, as he left the tent.—'I never troubles my head with things out of my line.'—

Then seeking his horse he leisurely rode back by the way he had come;—and as soon as he found himself beyond the out-posts of the corps, he urged Captain Peter to as much speed as the late arduous duties of the good beast left him power to exert.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN INCIDENT OF THE WAR NOT UNFAMILIAR TO THE TIME.

BREAKFAST was just over when Robinson was seen, from the windows of Mrs. Markham's parlour, pricking along the avenue that conducted to the front of the mansion; and when he drew up his horse at the door, the family were already assembled there to greet him. The plight, both of himself and of his steed, was such as to tell the best part of his story—they had travelled far and seen rough service. The rest was supplied by the sergeant himself who, before he moved from the spot where he had dismounted, gave a narrative of his adventures, which was listened to with great anxiety by the household.

By the sergeant's reckoning, Mrs. Markham's residence could not be more than twenty miles from the place, where, at day-break, he had encountered the British partisan,—whom he had left with a full conviction that the expedition, then on foot, was to be directed against the country lying upon the river. These tidings spread consternation throughout the mansion, and the morning was passed in all the confusion which such an alarm might be supposed to produce. The fright of the females rendered them irresolute, and incapable of attending to the most obvious precautions necessary to meet the emergency.

In this conjuncture, Robinson felt himself bound to assume the direction of affairs. At his suggestion, the plate and such other valuables as were likely to attract the cupidity of a licentious soldiery, were secreted in hiding places sufficiently secure to defy a hasty search. The family was advised to assume the appearance of as much composure as they could command;—and the last and most emphatic injunction of the sergeant, was to provide an ample and various repast, in the hope that the ill-will of the visitants might be conciliated by the display of good cheer. All this was accordingly put into a train of accomplishment.

In the midst of these preparations, the fears of the inhabitants of the mansion were but too truly realized. It was scarcely noon when the long column of Tarleton's cavalry was descried descending the high hills that lay in the distance, and, soon afterwards, taking the road that led into the plantation.

Whilst the panic produced by this sight was still fresh, the sound of bugles and trumpets showed that the invaders had already turned their steps towards the dwelling, and the next view disclosed them deploying from a wood, and advancing at a full trot. The quick beat of hoofs upon the soil, and the jangling sounds of sabres shaken against the flanks of the horses, struck upon the terrified ear of the proprietress of the estate, like the harsh portents of impending ruin; and, in the despair and agony of her distress, she retreated hastily to her chamber, whither she summoned her female domestics and gave way to a flood of tears. She was followed by Mildred, who, touched by the pervading disquiet of the family, participated in the alarm, and found herself overcome by a terror which she had never before experienced in all the scenes she had lately gone through. Obeying the instinct of her present fears, our heroine cowered beside her weeping friend, in the midst of the group of clamorous servants, and awaited in mute solicitude the coming events.

The cavalry had turned aside and halted in front of a barn some distance from the dwelling house, and a small party, consisting principally of officers attended by a

sergeant's guard, were immediately afterwards seen galloping up to the door. The air of exultation exhibited in their movement, their loud jocularity and frequent laughter, resembled the burst of gladsome riot with which a party of fox-hunters are wont to announce the first springing of their game, and gave evidence of the feelings of men who set little account upon the annoyance they threatened to a peaceful and unoffending household.

When the officers of the party had dismounted and entered the hall, the first person they encountered was sergeant Robinson, who had thoughtfully posted himself in view of the door.—and now, with some awkward and ungainly bows and scraping of his feet across the floor, bade them welcome.

‘What?’—said Tarleton, who was at the head of the intruders,—‘have we stumbled so soon again upon our shrewd and sensible ox!—Wise master Stephen Foster,—well met! So, you are the gentleman-usher to our good friend, Mrs. Markham! By my faith, the old lady is likely to have the honours of her house well administered!—

‘Your servant, sir,’—said Horse Shoe, again bowing and scraping his foot with a look of imperturbable gravity.—‘Mought I ax your honour to stomp as light upon the floor as you can?—My young lady is sick up stairs—and much noise is apt to flurry her narves.’

‘Tread daintily gentlemen,’—said Tarleton, laughing,—‘for your gallantry’s sake!—A lady’s nerves are as delicate as the strings of a harp, and must not be rudely struck. The damsel’s page here, (pointing to Horse Shoe) puts down his foot like a most considerate elephant—soft as a feather, you perceive;—and I would, by no means, have you give so worshipful a master of courtesy cause to complain of you.—As your wisdom,’—he added, again addressing the sergeant,—‘has found out, by this time, that you are in the house of mistress Markham,—although you *disremembered* that this morning—I suppose you can tell whether she is at home?’—

‘I can answer you that she is at home, sir,—that is, unless she has went out sence I saw her—which is not likely, sir.’—

'Then, present her colonel Tarleton's respects, and say that he has come to offer his duty to her.'—

'I suppose by that, you are wishing to see the lady,'—replied the sergeant,—'I'll let her know, sir.'—

Robinson retired for a few moments, and when he returned he announced to the commander, that Mrs. Markham was not willing to come from her chamber.—'But whatsoever your honour pleases to ax after, the lady promises you shall have,'—continued the sergeant.

'Well that's a condescension!—a good, comfortable lady!—So, gentlemen, you see we are in luck;—a broad roof over head,—a larder well stored, I hope,—and a cellar not altogether empty, I think I may undertake to promise.—Where are your waiting-men, my nimble Ganymede?—You are a sluggish oaf,—fellow—not to see that soldiers must have drink'—

Alfred and Henry now entered the hall, and the former approaching Tarleton, said, with a firm but respectful tone.—

'My mother has before been visited by British troops,—and she had so little then to thank them for, except their departure, that the fear of meeting them again has greatly alarmed her.—Our family, sir, has no older man in it than myself—and out of regard to helpless women'—

'That's enough, my pert lad,'—interrupted Tarleton,—'I have heard of your good mother before,—she is somewhat over-ready in her zeal in behalf of Marion's raggamuffins:—and, truly, I think she is more squeamish than she should be at the sight of a soldier, when she could look upon such hang-gallows knaves without shuddering.—You have another man in your house, I see, (directing his eye towards Henry Lindsay who had seated himself in the hall)—and full as old, I take it, as yourself?'—

'I wish I were a man of full age,'—said Henry, looking fearlessly at the British officer, and remaining fixed in his chair.—

'Why so, my gay sparrow-hawk?'—

'I would have disputed with you, your right to enter this door.'—

'These young cocks are all trained to show their

game,'—said the colonel, to one of his companions.—‘Well, you are a fine fellow, and I should be happy to be better acquainted with you.—A little too stiff, perhaps:—but you will learn better as you grow older.—You should thank me for making holiday in your school to-day.’

Here Robinson interposed before Henry could make the saucy reply he meditated, by announcing that the company would find some cool water and a supply of spirits in the adjoining room.—‘Besides,’—he added,—‘I have told the house-folks to make ready somewhat in the way of victuals, as I judged you mought be a little hungry.’

‘Not badly thought of, Mr. Ajax’—said one of the officers, as the party now crowded into the room.

‘Don’t forget, Stephen Foster,’—whispered Robinson, by way of admonition in regard to his assumed character, as he passed by the chair where Henry was sitting.—‘And keep a civil tongue in your head.’

Henry nodded compliance, and then, with Alfred, left the hall,—whilst the sergeant repaired to the refreshment room to offer his officious attentions to the guests.

Meanwhile, the ladies still kept to their chamber,—ever and anon gazing out at the window with a solicitous and unhappy interest, and occasionally receiving the highly-coloured reports of the servants, who, as often as any new subject of wonder or fear occurred to them, were plying backward and forward between the apartment and the head of the staircase.

After an interval of half an hour,—during which the uncouth din of laughter, of loud oaths, and of the careless swaggering of the party below, rose with a harsh note to the ear of the hostess and her companion,—these sounds abruptly ceased, and it was evident that the visitors had quitted the house. It was with an emotion of delight that Mrs. Markham, from the window, beheld colonel Tarleton and his comrades galloping towards the main body of his troops, that awaited him near the barn: but, on repairing to the hall, this sudden gleam of satisfaction was as suddenly clouded, when the matron perceived a sentinel posted at the front door. As soon as she came

within speech of this functionary, he threw up his hand to his brow, as he said.—‘The colonel commanded me to make his compliments to the ladies, and asks the honour of their company at dinner.’

‘Colonel Tarleton forgets himself,’—said Mrs. Markham, with a stately reserve that showed she had now dismissed her fears:—‘a brave soldier would hardly think it a triumph to insult unprotected females.’

‘He is here to speak for himself, madam,’—replied the sentinel, as Tarleton at this moment returned to the door.

The lady of the house, thus taken by surprise, firmly stood her ground and awaited in silence the accost of the officer. Tarleton was somewhat disconcerted by this unexpected encounter. He had entered with a hurried step, but the moment he was aware of the presence of the dame, he halted and removed his cap from his head, as he made a low obeisance.

‘I am too happy, madam,’—he said,—‘in the persuasion that you have overcome your unnecessary alarm at this visit,—and feel pleased to be afforded an opportunity of making my respects in person.’

‘I can conceive no sufficient reason, colonel Tarleton, why a defenceless house like mine should provoke the visit of such a host of armed men.’—

‘Your house, madam, has some fame upon this border, for good entertainment.—It fell in my way, and you will excuse me for the freedom of saying, that I boast myself too much of a cavalier to pass it by, unmarked by some token of my regard. Besides, I may add without meaning to be rude, our necessities, in the article of forage, madam, are quite as great as general Marion’s— who, I understand, does not scruple sometimes to take his contribution from you.’

‘I should more readily excuse your visit,’—replied the lady,—‘if you would time it when general Marion was levying his contribution. You might then adjust your right to the share you claim.—This house is yours, sir,— and it is not fit that I should remain to debate with you, your claim to dispose of whatever you may find in it.’—

‘Why, what a musty and wrinkled piece of insolence is here!’—muttered the angry soldier, clenching his teeth,

der this rebuke, as the matron withdrew.—‘Well, let the ones rail, and the maidens weep their fill!—the border mine, and merrily will I hold it:—and blithely will I ght up the river, too, before I leave it! Curse on these free-
oken women!—who says they are defenceless,—with that supple weapon that God has given them?—What ho, —you bag of chaff—booby—Foster,—I say!—Look ou,—have all the provisions in the house set out upon the tables:—and don’t spare your peach brandy, which we ave already tasted:—you have more of it.—So, let us ave the best,—I shall feast with a good will to-day—and will do it plentifully, or your ears shall be cropped.’

‘Every thing in the kitchen, sir, is going on at a gallop,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘and, as for the drinkables, your honour shall command the house to the last jug.’—

‘Then bestir yourself—for I am in no mood to tarry.’

In a brief lapse of time an abundant board was spread, and the leaders of the corps, consisting of some twenty or thirty officers of all ranks, were gathered around it. A scene of uproar succeeded that resounded to the roof with the unfeeling and licentious mirth of those engaged in the carouse.

When they had eaten and drunk their fill, the greater portion of the guests were assembled at the front door. From this position there was to be seen, at no great distance, a small enclosure of not above ten feet square, constructed with a dark paling, above which a venerable willow drooped its branches. Towards this enclosure some five or six of the revellers repaired, to gratify an idle and, at present, a maudlin curiosity. When they arrived here, they leaned across the paling to read the inscription upon a stone that seemed but recently to have been placed there. It was a simple memorial of the death of colonel Markham, of the Carolina militia, which was recorded to have taken place but eighteen months before, on the Savannah river, in an engagement with the troops under general Prevost. To this was added, in the spirit of the times, and in accordance with the sentiments of the whig leaders in the war of independence, a bitter expression of censure upon the barbarous disposition of the enemy, couched

in homely but earnest phrase, and speaking the hate of the survivors in the same sentence that commended the virtues of the dead.

It was an unpropitious moment for such a tablet to meet the eye of those who gazed upon it: and when it was read aloud by the captain of a troop, whose natural temper, rendered savage by the rudeness of the war, was also, at this moment, exasperated almost to intoxication by the freedom of the table, he vented his curses in loud and coarse rage against the memory of him to whom the stone was dedicated. This fire of passion spread through the group around the tomb, and each man responded to the first execration by others still deeper and more fierce. Proclaiming the inscription to be an insult, they made an attack upon the paling which was instantly demolished; and, seizing upon the largest stones at hand, they assailed the tablet with such effect as soon to break it in pieces;—and then, with a useless malice, applied themselves to obliterating the inscription upon the fragments.—Whilst engrossed with the perpetration of this sacrilege, their attention was suddenly aroused by the near report of a pistol—the ball of which, it was discovered, had struck into the trunk of the willow.

‘I will kill some of the scoundrels, if I die for it!’—was the exclamation heard immediately after the shot;—and Alfred Markham was seen struggling with an officer who had seized him. The young man had been observed and followed, as he madly rushed from a wing of the mansion towards the burial place, and arrested at the moment that he was levelling a second pistol:—

‘Henry, shoot him down!—he screamed to his companion, who was now approaching armed with his carbine.

‘Let me go, sir!—I will not see my father’s tomb disturbed by russians.’—

‘Loose your hands!—cried Henry, directing his passionate defiance to the individual who wrestled with Alfred,—‘loose you hands, I say—or I will fire upon you!—

‘Fire at the drunken villains around my father’s grave!’—shouted Alfred.

‘They shall have it,’—returned Henry, eagerly,—‘if it is the last shot I ever make.’—And with these words the youth levelled his piece at the same group which had before escaped Alfred’s aim,—but, luckily, the carbine snapped and missed fire. In the next instant Horse Shoe’s broad hand was laid upon Henry’s shoulder, as he exclaimed.—‘Why, master Henry,—have you lost your wits?—Do you want to bring predition and combustion both, down upon the heads of the whole house?’—

‘Galbraith Robinson—stand back!’—ejaculated Henry, —‘I’m not in the humour to be baulked.’—

‘Hush—for God’s sake, hush!—foolish boy,’—returned Robinson with real anger.—‘You are as fierce as a young panther—I am ashamed of you!’—

By this time the whole company were assembled around the two young men, and the violent out-break of wrath from those at whom the shot was aimed, as well as from others present, rose to a pitch which the authority of Tarleton in vain sought to control. Already, in this paroxysm of rage, one of the party, whose motions had escaped notice in the confusion of the scene, had hurried to the kitchen fire where he had snatched up a burning brand, and hurled it into the midst of some combustibles in a narrow apartment on the ground-floor.

The clamour had drawn Mrs. Markham and Mildred to the chamber window, and whilst they looked down with a frightened gaze upon the confused scene below, it was some moments before they became aware of the participation of Henry and Alfred in this sudden and angry broil. Mildred was the first to discern the two young men as they were dragged violently across the open space in front of the mansion by the crowd, and to hear the threats with which this movement was accompanied.

‘Merciful Heaven!’—she exclaimed,—‘they have laid hands upon Henry and Alfred—they will kill my brother—my dear brother?’—Almost frantic at the danger that threatened Henry and his companion, she fled precipitately down the stair-case, and in a moment stood confronted with colonel Tarleton, and his soldiers.

‘Never fear, sister,’—cried out Henry, who was already brought into the hall, as he saw Mildred descending the

stairs.—‘Don’t be alarmed for either Alfred or me.—We are ready to confess what we did and why we did it— and colonel Tarleton, if he is a true man, will not dare to say we did wrong.’

‘I charge you, colonel Tarleton,’—said Mildred with a firm but excited voice,—‘as the soldier of a christian nation, to save the people of this house from an inhuman and most wicked outrage. I implore you as an officer who would be esteemed valiant—and as a gentleman who would fly from dishonour,—to rescue your name from the disgrace of this barbarous violence.—For the sake of mercy—spare us—spare us!’

As she uttered this last ejaculation her spirit yielded to the vehemence of her feelings, and she flung herself upon her knee at the feet of the commander.—‘Oh, sir, do not let harm fall upon my brother.—I know not what he has done,—but he is thoughtless and rash.’

‘Mildred,’—said Henry, immediately rushing to his sister, and lifting her from the floor,—‘why should you kneel before him, or any man here?—This is no place for you—get back to your room.’—Then turning to Tarleton, he continued,—‘Alfred Markham and I tried to shoot down your men, because we saw them breaking the tomb. If it was to do over again our hands are ready.’

‘They have insulted the memory of my father,’—exclaimed Alfred,—‘trampled upon his grave, and broken the stone that covers him,—I aimed to kill the drunken coward who did it. That I say, sir, to your face.’

Tarleton, for a space, seemed to be bewildered by the scene. He looked around him, as if hesitating what course to pursue,—and once or twice made an effort to obtain silence in the hall;—but the tumult of many voices in angry contention still continued. At last he presented his hand to Mildred, and with a courteous action conducted her to a chair,—then begged her to calm her fears, as he promised her that no evil should befall either of the young men whose indiscreet tempers had occasioned the present uproar.

‘In God’s name! have they fired the dwelling?’—he exclaimed, as at this moment a volume of smoke rolled into the hall.—‘What ho, there!—O’Neal,—McPherson.—

Look where this smoke comes from,—and instantly extinguish the fire!—Stir yourselves, gentlemen. By my ilt, if any follower of mine has been so wild as to put a orch to this house, I will hang him up to the ridge-pole f the roof! Look to it—every man! Quick, quick—ere is danger that the flames may get ahead.'

In an instant nearly every soldier in the hall departed obediene to this order.—

'I beg, madam,'—Tarleton continued,—'that you will ismiss your alarm, and rest upon my pledge that no inmate of this house shall be harmed. I conjecture that have the honour to speak to Miss Lindsay—I have been informed that that lady has lately found shelter under this roof.'

'It is my name, sir,—and as the daughter of a friend to our quarrel, let me conjure you to see that this house is afe;—I cannot speak with you until I am assured of lat.'

At this juncture, Mrs. Markham was observed at the ead of the first flight of stairs, pale with affright, wring-ig her hands and uttering loud ejaculations of terror and rief as she made her way down to the hall:—

'Oh, sir,'—she said, as she approached the commander,—'we are harmless women and have done nothing to all down this vengeance upon us. Take what you will—ut spare my roof and save my family!—God will reward ou even for that act of humanity to a desolate widow.'

Before Tarleton could reply to the matron, a party of fficers came hastily into his presence,—at the head of whom was captain O'Neal, who reported that the fire was extinguished.

'One of the mess, to-day,'—he said,—'heated with rink and roused by the foolish temper of these hot-headed boys, threw a blazing billet into a closet.—Luckily, 'e reached the spot before any great harm was done. 'e chaps should be switched, and taught better manners.—It was a silly affair and might have made mischief.'

'See that the offender be arrested,'—replied Tarleton,—'will take measures to curb this licence. These meddilng youngsters, too—however, I can't blame them,—ey had provocation, I confess—and this war gives an

edge to all the metal of the country.—Instead of pop-guns now every baby has his powder and ball—dismiss the boys.—To your post, captain, and order every man to join his company.—Now, madam,’—he added in a tone of conciliation to Mrs. Markham, as soon as the hall was cleared,—‘I am sure you will not accuse me of incivility. My people have withdrawn—the fire is extinguished—these inconsiderate lads at liberty:—have I answered your wish?’

‘You have won the gratitude of a mother,’—replied the dame,—‘and the respect of an enemy.—I am bound to say to you, in return, that I cheerfully surrender to you whatever you may choose to take from my estate for the supply of your soldiers.—Alfred, my son, give me your arm, and help me to my chamber—I am feeble and faint. I must ask your permission to withdraw,’—she continued, as she courtesied to Tarleton, and ascended the stairs.

‘And I, too, must take my leave,’—said Tarleton.—‘But before I go I may claim the privilege of a word with Miss Lindsay. You spoke of your father, madam?—and, especially, as a friend of our arms. I have been told he lives in Virginia—Philip Lindsay—the proprietor of a seat called ‘The Dove Cote’—a royalist too,—am I right?’

‘So, my father is known, sir?’

‘That name has stood you in stead to-day, madam.—And this is your brother? I should think he is hardly of your father’s mind in regard to our quarrel.—This way, my thoughtless young gallant!—It was a wild, bold and very conceited thing of you to be challenging my unruly dragoons—and would have been no less so, if you had had twenty score of tall fellows at your back.—But it is past now, and you need not apologise for it,—it showed mettle at least, and we soldiers never quarrel with a man for that.—May I inquire, Miss Lindsay, in what direction you travel?—for I learn you are but a sojourner here.—It may be in my power to insure you safe conduct.’

‘I seek your general, lord Cornwallis, on matters of private concern,’—replied Mildred,—‘and if I might venture to ask it of colonel Tarleton, his service in affording me an unquestioned passage, would be a favour that I should gratefully acknowledge.’

'The obligation will be on my side, madam.—It will be pleasure to me to believe that I can serve a lady—much more the daughter of an honourable subject of the king. Permit me, without further parley—for time presses at this moment—to say that I will leave an escort behind me under the command of a trusty officer, who will wait our pleasure to conduct you, by the safest and easiest journey, to head-quarters. Your commands, madam, shall in all respects regulate his motion.—My communications with his lordship shall announce your coming. Now, Miss Lindsay, with my best wishes for your safety and success, I take my leave;—and, as a parting request, venture to hope you will do me the justice to say, that Tarleton is not such a graceless sinner as his enemies have sometimes been pleased to represent him.'

These last words were accompanied by a laugh, and a somewhat bluff courtesy, as the speaker swayed his rigid and ungainly figure into a succession of awkward bows by which he retreated to the door.

'I shall be happy on all occasions,'—replied Mildred, whilst the soldier was thus strenuously playing off the ruses of a gallant,—'to do justice to the kindness which have experienced at colonel Tarleton's hands.'

'There, Mildred,'—said Henry, when Tarleton had disappeared—'you see things have gone very pat for us. That comes of letting these fellows see who they have to deal with. A little powder and ball is a good letter of recommendation to the best of their gang. If my arbine hadn't missed fire to-day, Tarleton would have seen short by one bottle-holder, at least; when he set out to steal liquor from the country cupboards.'

'It has ended well, brother,'—replied Mildred,—'but it does not become you to boast of what you have done. It was a rash and dangerous deed, and had nearly brought ruin upon this friendly family.'

'Tut—sister!—you are only a woman. You wouldn't have found the colonel so civil if we hadn't taught him to look after his men.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

MILDRED ARRIVES AT THE TERM OF HER JOURNEY.—THE READER IS FAVOURED WITH A GLIMPSE OF A DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGE.

CORNWALLIS, after the battle of Camden, turned his thoughts to the diligent prosecution of his conquests. The invasion of North Carolina and Virginia was a purpose to which he had looked, from the commencement of this campaign, and he now, accordingly, made every preparation for the speedy advance of his army. The sickness of a portion of his troops and the want of supplies rendered some delay inevitable, and this interval was employed in more fully organizing the civil government of the conquered province, and in strengthening his frontier defences, by detaching considerable parties of men towards the mountains. The largest of these detachments were sent to reinforce Ferguson, to whom had been confided the operations upon the north-western border.

The chronicles of the time inform us that the British general lay at Camden until the 8th of September, at which date he set forward towards North Carolina. His movement was slow and cautious, and, for some time, his head-quarters were established at the Waxhaws, a position directly upon the border of the province about to be invaded. At this post our story now finds him,—the period being somewhere about the commencement of the last quarter of the month.

A melancholy train of circumstances had followed the fight at Camden, and had embittered the feelings of the contending parties against each other to an unusual degree of exasperation. The most prominent of these topics of anger, was the unjust and severe construction which the British authorities had given to the obligations which were supposed to affect such of the inhabitants of South Carolina, as had, after the capitulation of Charleston, surrendered themselves as prisoners on parole, or received protections from the new government. A proclamation, issued by Sir Henry Clinton in June, annulled the paroles, and ordered all who had obtained them to render military

service, as subjects of the king. This order, which the prisoners, as well as those who had obtained protections, held to be a dissolution of their contract with the new government, was disobeyed by a large number of the inhabitants, many of whom had, immediately after the proclamation, joined the American army.

Cornwallis permitted himself, on this occasion, to be swayed by sentiments unworthy of the character, generally imputed to him. Many of the liberated inhabitants were found in the ranks of Gates at Camden,—and several were made prisoners on the field. These latter, by the orders of the British general, were hung almost without the form of an inquiry: and it may well be supposed that, in the heat of war and ferment of passion, such acts of rigour,—defended on such light grounds—were met on the opposite side by a severe retribution.

Almost every day, during the British commander's advance, some of the luckless citizens of the province whom this harsh construction of duty affected, were brought into the camp of the invaders, and the soldiery had grown horribly familiar with the frequent military executions that ensued.

It was in the engrossment of the occupations and cares presented in this brief reference to the history of the time, that I have now to introduce my reader to Cornwallis.

He had resolved to move forward on his campaign. Orders were issued to prepare for the march, and the general had announced his determination to review the troops before they broke ground. A beautiful, bright and cool autumnal morning shone upon the wide plain, where an army of between two and three thousand men was drawn out in line. The tents of the recent encampment had already been struck, and a long array of baggage-wagons were now upon the high-road, slowly moving to a point assigned them in the route of the march. Cornwallis, attended by a score of officers, still occupied a small farm-house which had lately been his quarters. A number of saddle-horses in the charge of their grooms, and fully equipped for service, were to be seen in the neighbourhood of the door,—and the principal apartment

of the house showed that some of the loiterers of the company were yet engaged in despatching the morning meal. The aides-de-camp were seen speeding between the army and the general, with that important and neck-endangering haste which characterises the tribe of these functionaries;—and, almost momentarily, a courier arrived, bearing some message of interest to the commander-in-chief.

Cornwallis himself sat in an inner room, busily engaged with one of his principal officers in inspecting some documents regarding the detail of his force.—Apart from them, stood, with hat in hand and in humble silence, a young ensign of infantry.

‘Your name, sir?’—said Cornwallis, as he threw aside the papers which he had been perusing, and now addressed himself to the young officer.

‘Ensign Talbot, of the thirty-third foot,’—replied the young man:—‘I have come by the order of the adjutant-general to inform your lordship that I have just returned to my regiment, having lately been captured by the enemy while marching with the third convoy of the Camden prisoners to Charleston.’

‘Ha!—you were of that party! What was the number of prisoners you had in charge?’—

‘One hundred and fifty, so please your lordship.’—

‘They were captured’—

‘On Santee, by the rebels Marion and Horry,’—interrupted the ensign.—‘I have been in the custody of the rebels for a week, but contrived, a few days since, to make my escape.’—

‘Where found the rebels men to master you?’

‘Even from the country through which we journeyed,’—replied the ensign.—

‘The beggarly runagates!—Who can blame us, major M‘Arthur,’—said the general, appealing to the officer by his side, with an interest that obviously spoke the contest in his own mind in regard to the justice of the daily executions which he had sanctioned,—‘who can blame us for hanging up these recreants for their violated faith,—with such thick perfidy before our eyes? This Santee district, to a man, had given their paroles and taken my protection:—and, now,—the first chance they have

to play me a trick, they are up and at work—attacking our feeble escorts that should, in their sickly state, have rather looked to them for aid.—I will carry out the work:—by my sword, it shall go on sternly!—Enough, ensign—back to your company,’—he said, bowing to the young officer, who at once left the room.—

‘What is your lordship’s pleasure regarding this Adam Cusack?’—inquired M‘Arthur.—

‘Oh, aye!—I had well nigh forgotten that man.—He was taken, I think, in the act of firing on a ferry-boat at Cheraw?’—

‘The ball passed through the hat of my lord Dun-glas,’—said M‘Arthur.

‘The lurking hound!—A liege subject turning truant to his duty;—e’en let him bide the fate of his brethren.’

M‘Arthur merely nodded his head, and Cornwallis, rising from his chair, strode a few paces backward and forward through the room.—‘I would tune my bosom to mercy,’—he said, at length,—‘and win these dog-headed rebels back to their duty to their king, by kindness;—but good-will and charity towards them, fall upon their breasts like water on a heated stone, which is thrown back in hisses.—No,—no, that day is past and they shall feel the rod. We walk in danger whilst we leave these serpents in the grass.—Order the gentlemen to horse,—major M‘Arthur.—We must be stirring.—Let this fellow Cusack be dealt with like the rest. Gentlemen,’—added the chief, as he appeared at the door amidst the group who awaited his coming,—‘to your several commands!’

Captain Brodrick, the principal aid, at this moment arrested the preparations to depart, by placing in Cornwallis’s hand a letter which had just been brought by a dragoon to head-quarters.—

The general broke the seal, and, running his eye over the contents, said, as he handed the letter to the aid—‘This is something out of the course of the campaign—a letter from a lady, now at the picquet-guard,—and, it seems she desires to speak with me.—Who brought the billet, captain?’

‘This dragoon,—one of a special escort from the legion. They have in charge a party of travellers, who

have journeyed hither, under Tarleton's own pledge of passport.'

'Captain,'—replied Cornwallis,—'mount and seek the party. Conduct them to me without delay.—What toy is this that brings a lady to my camp?'—

The aid-de-camp mounted his horse and galloped off with the dragoon. He was conducted far beyond the utmost limit of the line of soldiers, and at length arrived at a small out-post, where some fifty men were drawn up, under the command of an officer of the picquet-guard, which was about returning to join the main body of the army. Here he found Mildred and Henry Lindsay and their two companions, Horse Shoe and old Isaac, attended by the small escort furnished by Tarleton. This party had been two days on the road from Mrs. Markham's, and had arrived, the preceding night, at a cottage in the neighbourhood, where they had found tolerable quarters. They had advanced this morning, at an early hour, to the *corps de garde* of the picquet, where Mildred preferred remaining until Henry could despatch a note to Lord Cornwallis apprising him of their visit.

When captain Brodrick rode up, the travellers were already on horseback and prepared to move. The aid-de-camp respectfully saluted Miss Lindsay and her brother, and after a short parley with the officer of the escort, tendered his services to the strangers to conduct them to head-quarters.

'The general, madam,'—he said,—'would have done himself the honour to wait on you, but presuming that you were already on your route to his quarters, where you might be better received than in the scant bivouac of an out-post, he is led to hope that he consults your wish and your comfort both, by inviting you to partake of such accommodation as he is able to afford you.'

'My mission would idly stand on ceremony, sir,'—replied Mildred.—'I thank lord Cornwallis for the promptness with which he has answered my brother's message.'

'We will follow you, sir,'—said Henry.

The party now rode on.

Their path lay along the skirts of the late encampment upon the border of an extensive plain, on the opposite

side of which the army was drawn out;—and it was with the exultation of a boy, that Henry, as they moved forward, looked upon the long line of troops glittering in the bright sunshine, and heard the drums rolling their spirited notes upon the air.

When they arrived at a point where the road emerged from a narrow strip of forest, they could discern, at the distance of a few hundred paces, the quarters of the commander-in-chief. Immediately on the edge of this wood, a small party of soldiers attracted the attention of the visitors by the earnest interest with which they stood around a withered tree, and gazed aloft at its sapless and huge boughs.—Before any thing was said, Mildred had already ridden within a few feet of the circle, where turning her eyes upward she saw the body of a man swung in the air by a cord attached to one of the widest-spreading branches. The unfortunate being was just struggling in the paroxysms of death, as his person was swayed backward and forward, with a slow motion, by the breeze.

‘Oh God—what a sight is here!’—exclaimed the lady.—‘I cannot,—will not go by this spot.—Henry—brother—I cannot pass.’—

The aid-de-camp checked his horse and grasped her arm, before her brother could reach her, and Horse Shoe, at the same moment, sprang to the ground and seized her bridle.

‘I should think it but a decent point of war to keep such sights from women’s eyes,’—said Robinson, somewhat angrily.—

‘Peace, sirrah,’—returned the aid—‘you are saucy.—I trust, madam, you are not seriously ill? I knew not of this execution, or I should have spared you this unwelcome spectacle.—Pray, compose yourself,—and believe, madam, it was my ignorance that brought you into this difficulty.’—

‘I will not pass it,’—cried Mildred wildly, as she sprang from her horse and ran some paces back towards the wood, with her hands covering her face. In a moment Henry was by her side.—

‘Nay, sister—dear sister,’—he said—‘do not take it so grievously. The officer did not know of this.—There

now—you are better—we will mount again and ride around this frightful place.'—

Mildred gradually regained her self-possession, and after a few minutes was again mounted and making a circuit through the wood to avoid this appalling spectacle.

'Who is this man?'—asked Henry of the aid-de-camp, in a half whisper—'and what has he done, that they have hung him?'

'It is an every-day tale,'—replied the officer,—'a rebel, traitor who has broken his allegiance, by taking arms against the king in his own conquered province. I keep no count of these fellows—but I believe this is a bold rebel by the name of Adam Cusack, that was caught lately at the Cheraw ferry:—and our boobies must be packing him off to head-quarters, for us to do their hangman's work.'—

'If we were to hang all of your men that we catch,'—replied Henry—'hemp is an article that would rise in price.'—

'What, sir,'—returned the officer, with a look of surprise—'do you class yourself with the rebels?—What makes you here under Tarleton's safe guard?—I thought you must needs be friends, at least, from the manner of your coming.'

'We ride, sir, where we list,'—said Henry—'and if we ride wrong now,—let his lordship decide that for us, and we will return.'

By this time the company had reached the head-quarters, where Mildred found herself in the presence of lord Cornwallis.

'Though on the wing, Miss Lindsay,'—said his lordship, as he respectfully met the lady and her brother upon the porch of the dwelling-house,—'I have made it a point of duty to postpone weighty matters of business, to receive your commands.'—

Mildred bowed her head, and after a few words of courtesy on either side, and a formal introduction of herself and her brother to the general as the children of Philip Lindsay, 'a gentleman presumed to be well known to his lordship,' and some expressions of surprise and

concern on the part of the chief at this unexpected announcement—she begged to be permitted to converse with him in private.—When in accordance with this wish, she found herself and her brother alone with the general, in the small parlour of the house, she began with a trembling accent and blanched cheek,—

‘I said, my lord, that we were the children of Philip Lindsay, of the Dove Cote, in Amherst, in the province of Virginia: and being taught to believe that my father has some interest with your lordship’—

‘He is a worthy, thoughtful and wise gentleman,—of the best consideration amongst the friends of the royal cause,—’—interrupted the earl—‘so, speak on, madam, and speak calmly.—Take your time—your father’s daughter shall not find me an unwilling listener.’—

‘My father was away from home,—’—interposed Henry—‘and tidings came to us that a friend of ours was most wickedly defamed and belied, by a charge carried to the ears of your lordship;—as we were told, that major Arthur Butler of the continental army, who had been made a prisoner by your red coats somehow or other,—for I forget how—but the charge was that he had contrived a plan to carry off my father from the Dove Cote—if not to kill him, which was said, besides—and upon that charge, it was reported that your people were going to hang or shoot him—hang, I suppose, from what we saw just now over here in the woods—and that your lordship had given orders to have the thing put off until the major could prove the real facts of the case.—

‘The tale is partly true, young sir,—’—said Cornwallis.—‘We have a prisoner of that name and rank.’—

My sister Mildred and myself, thinking no time was to be lost, have come to say to your lordship that the whole story is a most sinful lie, hatched on purpose to make mischief—and most probably by a fellow by the name of—’

‘My brother speaks too fast,—’—interrupted Mildred.—‘It deeply concerned us to do justice to a friend in this matter. If my father had been at home a letter from him to your lordship would have removed all doubts;—but alas!—he was absent—and I knew not what to do, but to

come personally before your lordship, to assure you that to the perfect knowledge of our whole family, the tale from beginning to end is a malicious fabrication. Major Butler loves my father, and would be accounted one of his nearest and dearest friends.'—

Cornwallis listened to this disclosure with a perplexed and bewildered conjecture, to unravel the strange riddle which it presented to his mind.

'How may I understand you, Miss Lindsay?'—he said—'this major Butler is in the service of congress.'—

'Even so. Your lordship speaks truly.'—

'Your father—my friend, Philip Lindsay, is a faithful and persevering loyalist.'

'To the peril of his life and fortune,'—replied Mildred.

'And yet Butler is his friend?'—

'He would be esteemed so, if it please your lordship—and, in heart and feeling, is so.'

'He is related to your family, perhaps?'—

'Related in affection, my lord, and plighted love,'—said Mildred, blushing and casting her eyes upon the ground.

'So!—Now I apprehend. And there are bonds between you?'—

'I may not answer your lordship,'—returned the lady.—'It only imports our present business to tell your lordship, that Arthur Butler never came to the Dove Cote, but with the purest purpose of good to all who lodged beneath its roof. He has never come there, but that I was apprised of his intent; and never thought rose in his heart that did not breathe blessings upon all that inhabit near my father. Oh, my lord, it is a base trick of an enemy to do him harm; and they have contrived this plot to impose upon your lordship's generous zeal in my father's behalf.'

'It is a strange story,'—said Cornwallis.—'And does your father know nothing of this visit? Have you, Miss Lindsay, committed yourself to all the chances of this rude war, and undertaken this long and toilsome journey, to vindicate a rebel charged with a most heinous device of perfidy?—It is a deep and painful interest that could move you to this enterprise.'

'My lord,—my mission requires a frank confidence.—I

have heard my father say you had a generous and feeling heart—that you were a man to whom the king had most wisely committed his cause in this most trying war: that your soul was gifted with moderation, wisdom, forecast, firmness—and that such a spirit as yours was fit to master and command the rude natures of soldiers, and to compel them to walk in the paths of justice and mercy.—All this and more have I heard my father say,—and this encouraged me to seek you in your camp, and to tell you the plain and undisguised truth touching these charges against major Butler. As Heaven above hears me, I have said nothing but the simple truth. Arthur Butler never dreamt of harm to my dear father?—

‘He is a brave soldier,’—said Henry,—‘and if your lordship would but give him a chance, and put him before the man who invented the lie,—he would make the scoundrel eat his words; and they should be handed to him on the major’s sword point.’—

‘The gentleman is happy,’—said the chief,—‘in two such zealous friends.—You have not answered me—is your father aware of this visit, Miss Lindsay?’—

‘He is ignorant even of the nature of the charge against Arthur Butler,’—replied the lady.—‘He was absent from the Dove Cote when the news arrived;—and, fearing that delay might be disastrous, we took the matter in hand ourselves.’—

‘You might have written.’—

‘The subject, so please your lordship, was too near to our hearts to put it to the hazard of a letter.’—

‘It is a warm zeal—and deserves to be requited with a life’s devotion,’—said Cornwallis.—‘You insinuated, young sir, just now, that you suspected the author of this imputed slander.’—

‘My brother is rash—and speaks hastily,’—interrupted Mildred.

‘Whom were you about to name?’—asked the general, of Henry.—

‘There was a man named Tyrrel,’—replied the youth,—‘that has been whispering in my father’s ear somewhat concerning a proposal for my sister,’—(here Mildred cast a keen glance at her brother and bit her lip)—‘and they

say, love sometimes makes men desperate,—and I took a passing notion that, may be, he might have been at the bottom of it—I know nothing positively to make me think so—but only speak from what I have read in books.'

Cornwallis smiled as he replied playfully.—'Tush, my young philosopher, you must not take your wisdom from romances. I have heard of Tyrrel, and will stand his surety that love has raised no devil to conjure such mischief in his breast.—What will satisfy your errand hither, Miss Lindsay?'—

'A word from your lordship, that no harm shall befall Arthur Butler, beyond the necessary durance of a prisoner of war.'

'That is granted you at once,'—replied the general,—'granted for your sake, madam, in the spirit of a cavalier who would deny no lady's request.—And I rather grant it to you, because certain threats have been sent me from some of the major's partisans, holding out a determination to retaliate blood for blood.—These had almost persuaded me to run, against my own will, to an extreme.—I would have you let it be known, that as a free grace to a lady, I have done that which I would refuse to the broad-sword bullies of the mountains.—What next would you have?'—

'Simply, an unmolested passage hence, beyond your lordship's posts.'—

'That too shall be cared for.—And thus the business being done—with your leave, I will go to more unmanly employments.'—

'A letter for your lordship,'—said an officer, who at this moment entered the door, and putting a pacquet into the general's hand, retired.—

Cornwallis opened the letter and read it.—

'Ha!—by my faith, but this is a rare coincidence!—This brings matter of interest to you, Miss Lindsay.—My officer Macdonald, who had Butler in custody, writes me that, two days since, his prisoner had escaped.

'Escaped!'—exclaimed Mildred, forgetting in whose presence she spoke,—'unhurt—uninjured.—Thank Heaven for that'—

Cornwallis sat for a moment silent, as a frown grew upon his brow, and he played his foot against the floor, abstracted in thought.—‘These devils have allies,’—he muttered,—‘in every cabin of the country. We have treachery and deceit lurking behind every bush.—We shall be poisoned in our pottage by these false and hollow knaves.—If it gives you content, madam,’—he said, raising his voice,—‘that this major Butler, should abuse the kindness or clemency of his guard and fly from us at the moment we were extending a boon of mercy to him through your supplications, you may hereafter hold your honourable soldier in higher esteem for his dexterity and cunning.’—

‘I pray your lordship to believe,’—said Mildred, with a deep emotion, which showed itself in the rich, full tones of her voice,—‘that major Butler knows nothing of my coming hither. I speak not in his name, nor make any pledge for him. If he has escaped, it has only been from the common instinct which teaches a bird to fly abroad when it finds the door of its cage left open by the negligence of its keepers. I knew it not—nor, alas! have I heard aught of his captivity, but as I have already told your lordship. He is an honourable soldier, rich in all the virtues that may commend a man:—I would your lordship knew him better and in more peaceful times.’—

‘Well, it is but a peevish and silly boy,’—said Cornwallis,—‘who whines when his pie is stolen.—The war has many reckonings to settle, and we contrive to make one day’s profit pay another’s loss.—The account for the present is balanced; and so, Miss Lindsay, without dis-courtesy, I may leave you,—with a fair wish for a happy and prosperous journy back to your father’s roof. To the good gentleman himself, I desire to be well remem-bered.—And to show you that this briery path of war has not quite torn away all the habiliments of gentleness from us, I think it dutiful to tell you that, as I have become the confidant of a precious love-tale,—wherein I can guess some secret passage of mystery is laid which should not be divulged—I promise you to keep it faithfully between ourselves.—And when I reach the Dove Cote,—which, God willing, under the banners of St.

George, I do propose within three months to do, we may renew our conference—and you shall have my advice touching the management of this dainty and delicate affair.—And now, God speed you with a fair ride, and good spirits to back it!—

‘I am much beholden to your lordship’s generosity,’—said Mildred, as Cornwallis rose with a sportive gallantry and betook himself to his horse.

‘Come hither Mr. Henry,’—he said after he had mounted,—‘farewell, my young cavalier.—You will find a few files of men to conduct you and your party beyond our posts:—and here, take this,’—he added, as now on horseback, he scrawled off a few lines with a pencil, upon a leaf of his pocket book, which he delivered to the youth—‘there is a passport which shall carry you safe against all intrusion from my people.—Adieu!’

With this last speech the commander-in-chief put spurs to his horse, and galloped to the plain, to review his troops and commence the march by which he hoped to make good his boast of reaching the Dove Cote.

How fortune seconded his hopes may be read in the story of the war.

CHAPTER XXV.

A BRITISH PARTISAN.

As the events of this history are confined to the duration of the Tory Ascendancy in South Carolina, it becomes me to prepare my reader for the conclusion to which, doubtless much to his content, he will hear that we are now hastening. We have reached a period which brings us to take notice of certain important operations that were in progress upon the frontier, and touching the details of which, to avoid prolixity, I must refer to the graver chronicles of the times. It answers my present purpose, merely to apprise my reader that colonel Clarke had lately assembled his followers and marched to Augusta, where he had made an attack upon Brown, but

that almost at the moment when his ~~dangerous~~ and valiant adversary had fallen within his grasp, a timely succour from Fort Ninety-Six, under the command of Cruger, had forced him to abandon his ground, and retreat towards the mountain districts of North Carolina. To this, it is important to add that Ferguson had now recruited a considerable army amongst the native Tories, and had moved to the small frontier village of Gilbert town, with a purpose to intercept Clarke and thus place him under the disadvantage of having a foe both in front and rear.

The midnight seizure of Arthur Butler and his friends, whilst returning from Ramsay's funeral, was effected by M'Alpine, who happened at that moment to be hastening, by a forced march, with a detachment of newly-recruited cavalry from Ninety-Six to strengthen Ferguson, and to aid in what was expected to be the certain capture of the troublesome Whig partisan.

As M'Alpine's purpose required despatch, he made but a short delay after sun-rise at Drummond's cabin, and then pushed forward with his prisoners, with all possible expedition. The route of his journey diverged, almost at the spot of the capture, from the roads leading towards Musgrove's mill, and he consequently had but little chance to fall in with parties who might communicate to him the nature of the accident, which threw the prisoners into his possession;—whilst the prisoners themselves were sufficiently discreet to conceal from him every thing that might afford a hint of Butler's previous condition.

The road lay through a rugged wilderness, and the distance to be travelled, before the party could reach Gilbert town, was something more than sixty miles. It was, accordingly, about the middle of the second day after leaving Drummond's habitation, before the troop arrived at the term of their journey—a period that coincided with that of Cornwallis' breaking ground from his late encampment at the Waxhaws, which we have seen in the last chapter.

Ferguson was a stout, fearless and bluff soldier, and instigated by the most unsparing hatred against all who took up the Whig cause. He had been promoted by

earl Cornwallis to the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel, a short time before the battle of Camden, and despatched towards this wild and mountainous border to collect together and organize the Tory inhabitants of the district. His zeal and activity, no less than his peremptory bearing, had particularly recommended him to the duty to be performed;—and he is, at least, entitled to the commendation of having acquitted himself with great promptitude and efficiency in the principal objects of his appointment. He was now at the head of between eleven and twelve hundred men, of which about one hundred and fifty were regulars of the British line,—the remainder consisting of the disorderly and untamed population of the frontier.

Gilbert town was a small village, composed of a number of rather well-built and comfortable log houses. It was situated in a mountainous but fertile district of North Carolina, about the centre of Rutherford county.—And I may venture to add, (which I do upon report only,) that although its former name has faded from the maps of the present day, under that reprehensible indifference to ancient associations, and that pernicious love of change which have obliterated so many of the landmarks of our revolutionary history,—yet that this village is still a prosperous and pleasant community, known as the seat of justice to the county to which it belongs.

When the troop having charge of Butler and his companions arrived, they halted immediately in front of one of the largest buildings of the village; and in a short time the prisoners were marched into the presence of Ferguson. They were received in a common room, of ample dimensions, furnished with a table upon which was seen a confused array of drinking vessels, and a number of half-emptied bottles of spirit surrounding a wooden bucket filled with water. Immediately against one of the posts of the door of the apartment, the carcass of a buck, recently shot and now stripped of its skin, hung by the tendons of the hinder feet; and a soldier was at this moment employed with his knife in the butcher-craft necessary to its preparation for the spit. Ferguson himself, conspicuous for his robust, athletic and weather-

beaten exterior, stood by apparently directing the operation. Around the room were hung the hide and antlers of former victims of the chase, intermingled with various weapons of war, military cloaks, cartridge-boxes, bridles, saddles and other furniture denoting the habitation of a party of soldiers. There was a general air of disorder and untidiness throughout the apartment, which seemed to bespeak early and late revels, and no great observance of the thrift of even military housekeeping. This impression was heightened to the eye of the beholder, by the unchecked liberty with which men of all ranks, privates as well as officers, flung themselves, as their occasions served, into the room and made free with the contents of the flasks that were scattered over the table.

The irregular and ill-disciplined host under Ferguson's command, lay in and around the village, and presented a scene of which the predominating features bore a sufficient resemblance to the economy of their leader's own quarters, to raise but an unfavourable opinion of their subordination and soldier-like demeanour:—it was wild, noisy and confused.

When M'Alpine entered the apartment, the words that fell from Ferguson showed that his mind, at the moment, was disturbed by a double solicitude—alternating between the operations performed upon the carcass of venison, and certain symptoms of uproar and disorder that manifested themselves amongst the militia without.

‘Curse on these swaggering, upland bullies!’—he said, whilst M'Alpine and the prisoners stood inside the room, as yet unnoticed,—‘I would as soon undertake to train as many wolves from the mountain, as bring these fellows into habits of discipline.—Thady, you cut that haunch too low—go deep, man,—a long sweep from the pommel to the cantle—it is a saddle worth riding on!—By the infernal gods!—if these yelping savages do not learn to keep quiet in camp, I'll make a school for them with my regulars, where they shall have good taste of the cat!—nine hours drill and all the camp duty besides!—Ha, M'Alpine,—is it you who have been standing here all this while? I didn't observe it, man:—my quarters are like a bar-room, and have been full of comers and

goers all day.—I thought you were but some of my usual free-and-easy customers.—Damn them,—I am sick of these gawky, long-legged, half-civilized recruits!—but I shall take a course with them yet.—What news, old boy? What have you to tell of the rebels?—Where is my pretty fellow, Clarke?"—

"Clarke is still in the woods,'—replied M'Alpine.—'It would take good hounds to track him.'—

"And Cruger, I hope, has nose enough to follow. So, the cunning Indian hunter will be caught at last! We have him safe now, M'Alpine.—There is but one path for the fox to come out of the bush,—and upon that path Patrick Ferguson has about as pretty a handful of mischievous imps as ever lapped blood. The slinking runaway never reaches the other side of the mountains while I am awake. With Cruger behind him,—our line of posts upon his right,—the wild mountains, as full of Cherokees as squirrels, upon his left,—and these devils of mine right before him,—we have him in a pretty net. Who have you here, captain?"—

"Some stray rebel game, that I picked up on my road, as I came from Ninety-Six. This gentleman, I learn, is major Butler of the continental army,—and these others some of his party."—

"So, ho, more rebels!—damn it, man,'—exclaimed the commandant,—'why do you bring them to me? What can I do with them'—then dropping his voice into a tone of confidential conference,—he added,—'but follow the fashion and hang them? I have got some score of prisoners already—and have been wishing that they would cut some devilish caper, that I might have an excuse for stringing them up, to get clear of them.—A major in the regular continental line, sir?"—he asked, addressing himself to Butler.—

Butler bowed his head.—

"I thought the cuffs your people got at Camden, had driven every thing like a day-light soldier out of the province.—We have some skulking bush-fighters left—some jack-o'-lantern devils, that live in the swamps and feed on frogs and water-snakes—Marion and Sumpter and a few of their kidney:—but you, sir, are the first regular

continental officer I have met with.—What brought you so far out of your latitude?"—

"I was on my way to join one,"—replied Butler,—"that, but now, you seemed to think in severe straits?"—

"Ha! to visit Clarke, eh?—Well, sir,—may I be bold to ask, do you know where that worshipful gentleman is to be found?"

"I am free to answer you,"—said Butler—“that his position, at this moment, is entirely unknown to me. On my journey I heard the report, that he had been constrained to abandon Augusta'—

"Yes, and in haste, let me tell you.—And marches in this direction, major Butler,—as he needs must.—I shall make his acquaintance:—and inasmuch as you went to seek him, you may count it a lucky accident that brought you here—you will find him all the sooner by it'—

"Doubtless, sir, colonel Clarke will feel proud to see you,"—returned Butler.—

"Well, M'Alpine,"—said Ferguson,—“I have my hands full of business;—for I certainly have the wildest crew of devil's babies that ever stole cattle, or fired a haystack.—I am obliged to coax them into discipline by a somewhat free use of this mother's milk—(pointing to the bottles)—“to which I now and then add a gentle castigation at the drum head,—and, when that doesn't serve, a dose of powder and lead, administered at ten paces from a few files of grenadiers.—By the lord, I have shot a brace of them, since you left me, only for impertinence to their officers!—This waiting for Clarke plays the devil with us.—I must be moving,—and have some thought of crossing the mountains westward, and burning out the settlements.—Faith!—I would do it, just to keep my lads in spirits, if I thought Clarke would give me another week.—How' now, Thady?—that buck should have been half roasted by this time.—We shall never have dinner with your slow work.—Look at that, M'Alpine,—there is something to make your mouth water—an inch and a half of fat on the very ridge of the back.—Give over your prisoners to the camp major—he will take care of them:—and, hark you, captain,"—he added, beckoning his comrade aside—“if you choose, as you seem to think

well of this major Butler, you may bring him into dinner presently, with my compliments.—Now, away—I must to business.'—

The prisoners were conducted to a separate building, where they were put in charge of an officer, who performed the duties of provost-marshall over some twenty or more Whigs that had been captured in the late excursions of the Tories, and brought into camp for safe keeping. The place of their confinement was narrow and uncomfortable, and Butler was soon made aware that in the exchange of his prison at Musgrove's mill for his present one, he had made an unprofitable venture. His condition with Ferguson, however, was alleviated by the constantly-exciting hope that the events which were immediately in prospect might, by the chances of war, redound to his advantage.

In this situation Butler remained for several days. For although Ferguson found it necessary to keep in almost constant motion, with a view to hover about the supposed direction of Clarke's retreat, and, conformably to this purpose, to advance into South Carolina, and again to fall back towards his present position,—yet he had established a guard at Gilbert town which, during all these operations, remained stationary with the prisoners,—apparently waiting some fit opportunity to march them off to Cornwallis' army, that was now making its way northward. That opportunity did not present itself.—The communications between this post and the commander-in-chief were, by a fatal error, neglected; and in a short time from the date of the present events, as will be seen in the sequel, a web was woven which was strong enough to ensnare and bind up the limbs of the giant who had, during the last five months, erected, and maintained the Tory Ascendancy in Carolina.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MILDRED TURNS HER STEPS HOMeward.

I HAVE seen a generous and brave boy defied to some enterprise of terror,—such as, peradventure, to clamber in the dark night, alone, up many a winding bout of stair-case to the garret,—and he has undertaken the achievement although sore afraid of goblins,—and gone forth upon his adventure with a lusty step and with a bold tardiness, whistling or singing on his way—his eyes and ears, all the time, fearfully open to all household sights and sounds, now magnified out of their natural proportions;—and when he had reached the farthest term of his travel, I have known him to turn quickly about and to come down, three steps at a leap,—feeling all the way as if some spectre tracked his flight and hung upon his rear. Calling up such a venture to my mind, I am enabled by comparison with the speed and anxiety of the boy, to show my reader with what emotions Mildred, her mission being done, now turned herself upon her homeward route. The excitement occasioned by her knowledge of the critical circumstances of Butler, and the pain she had suffered in the belief that upon the courageous performance of her duty, depended even his life, had nerved her resolution to the perilous and hardy exploit in which we have seen her.—But now, when matters had taken such a suddenly auspicious turn, and she was assured of her lover's safety,—not even the abrupt joy which poured in upon her heart, was sufficient to stifle her sense of uneasiness at her present exposed condition, and she eagerly prepared to betake herself back to the Dove Cote.

The scenes around her had wrought upon her nerves; and although she was singularly fortunate in the courtesy which she had experienced from all into whose hands she had fallen, yet the rude licentiousness of the camp, and the revolting acts of barbarity which were ever present to her observation, appalled and distressed her. Besides, she now saw the fixed purpose with which Cornwallis was preparing to march forward in his course of invasion,

and thought with alarm upon the probable event of soon having the theatre of war transferred to the neighbourhood of her native woods.

Robinson's advice seconded her own alacrity. It was to hasten, with all despatch, in advance of the invading army;—and as this body was now about taking up its line of march, no time was to be lost. Accordingly, but a brief delay took place after Cornwallis and his suite had departed from head-quarters, before our party set forward, accompanied by the small guard of cavalry that had been ordered to attend them. The troops were just wheeling into column on the ground where they had been lately reviewed, when Mildred and her attendants galloped past, and took the high road leading to the town of Charlotte, in North Carolina,—towards which, it was understood, the invaders were about to direct their journey. In less than an hour afterwards, they had left behind them the line of baggage wagons, and the small military parties of the vanguard,—and found themselves rapidly hastening towards a district occupied by the friends of independence.

The sergeant had now occasion for his utmost circumspection. In pursuing the destined route of the invasion, he had reason to expect an early encounter with some of the many corps of observation, which the opposite party were certain to put upon the duty of reporting the approach of their enemy. And so it fell out;—for, towards the middle of the day, whilst the travellers were quietly plying their journey through the forest, the discharge of a pistol announced the presence of a hostile body of men,—and almost instantly afterwards a small handful of Whig cavalry were seen hovering upon the road, at the distance of some three or four hundred paces in front. Robinson no sooner recognized this squad, than he took the lady's handkerchief and hoisted it on a rod, as a flag of truce, and, at the same moment, directed the escort to retreat—apprising them, that their presence was no longer necessary, as he had now an opportunity to deliver his charge into the hands of friends. The British horsemen, accordingly, took their leave—and, in the next moment, Horse Shoe surrendered to a patrol, who an-

nounced themselves to be a part of the command of colonel Davie of the North Carolina militia—a gallant partisan, then well-known to fame, and whose after-exploits fill up no inconsiderable page of American history.

It does not enter into the purpose of my story to detain my reader with a minute account of Mildred's homeward journey;—but having now transferred her to the protection of a friendly banner, it will suffice to say that she arrived the same evening at Charlotte, where she spent the night in the midst of the active, warlike preparations which were in progress to receive Cornwallis.

It was towards sunset on the following day, when, wearied with the toil of a long and rapid journey, our travellers arrived in front of a retired farm-house, on the road leading through the upper districts of North Carolina. The cultivation around this dwelling showed both good husbandry and a good soil, and there was an appearance of comfort and repose, which was an unusual sight in a country so much alarmed and ravaged by war, as that over which the wayfarers had lately journeyed. The house stood some short distance apart from the road, and in the porch was seated an elderly man of a respectable appearance, to whom a young girl was, at this moment, administering a draught of water from a small, hooped, wooden vessel which she held in her hand.

‘I am parched with thirst,’—said Mildred,—‘pray get me some of that water.’—

‘The place looks so well, ma’am,’—replied the sergeant, —‘that I think we could not do better than make a stop here for the night.—Good day, neighbour!—What is the name of the river I see across yon field, and where mought we be, just at this time?’

‘It is the Yadkin,’—answered the man,—‘and this county, I believe, is Iredell—though I speak only by guess —for I am but a stranger in these parts.’—

‘The lady would be obligated,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘for a drop of that water—and, if it was agreeable, she mought likewise be pleased to put up here for the night.’—

‘The people of the house are kind and worthy,’—replied the old man,—‘and not likely to refuse a favour.—Mary, take a cup to the lady.’—

The girl obeyed; and, coming up to the party with the vessel in her hand, she suddenly started as her eye fell upon Horse Shoe,—and her pale and wan countenance was seen bathed in tears.—

“Mr. Robinson!”—she exclaimed, with a faltering voice—“you don’t know me?—me, Mary Musgrove.—Father, it is our friend Horse Shoe Robinson!”—Then placing the vessel upon the ground, she ran to the sergeant’s side, as he sat upon his horse, and leaning her head against his saddle, she wept bitterly, sobbing out,—“it is me, Mary Musgrove.—John—our John—that you loved—he is dead—he is dead!”—

In an instant, Allen Musgrove was at the gate, where he greeted the sergeant with the affection of an old friend.—

This recognition of the miller and his daughter, at once confirmed the sergeant in his determination to end his day’s journey at this spot. In a few moments, Mildred and her companions were introduced into the farm-house, where they were heartily welcomed by the indwellers, consisting of a sturdy, cheerful tiller of the soil and a motherly dame, whose brood of children around her showed her to be the mistress of the family.

The scene that ensued after the party were seated in the house was, for some time, painfully affecting.—Poor Mary, overcome by the associations called up to her mind at the sight of the sergeant, took a seat near him, and silently gazed in his face—visibly labouring under a strong desire to express her feelings in words, but at the same time stricken mute by the intensity of her emotions.

After a long suspense, which was broken only by her sobs, she was enabled to utter a few disjointed sentences, in which she recalled to the sergeant, the friendship that had subsisted between him and John Ramsay;—and there was something peculiarly touching in the melancholy tone with which, in accordance with the habits inculcated by her religious education, and most probably in the words of her father’s frequent admonitions, she attributed the calamity that had befallen her to the kindly chastisement of heaven,—to endure which, she devoutly, and

with a sigh that showed the bitterness of her suffering, prayed for patience and submission. Allen Musgrave, at this juncture, interposed with some topics of consolation, suitable to the complexion of the maiden's mind, and soon succeeded in drying up her tears and restoring her, at least, to the possession of a tranquil and apparently a resigned spirit.

When this was done, he gave a narrative of the events relating to the escape of Butler and his subsequent recapture at the funeral of John Ramsay,—to which, it may be imagined, Mildred and Henry listened with the most absorbed attention.

This tale of the recapture of Butler,—so unexpected,—and communicated at a moment when Mildred's heart beat high with the joyful hopes of speedily seeing her lover again in safety, now struck upon her ear with the alarm that seizes upon a voyager who, fearing no hidden reef or unknown shoal, hears the keel of his ship, in mid ocean, crash against a solid rock.—It seemed at once to break down the illusion which she had cherished with such fond affection. For the remainder of the evening the intercourse of the party was anxious and thoughtful,—and betrayed the unhappy impression which the intelligence just communicated had made upon the feelings of Mildred and her brother. Musgrave, after the travellers had been refreshed by food, and invigorated by the kind and hearty hospitality of the good man under whose roof they were sheltered, proceeded to give the sergeant a history of what had lately befallen in the neighbourhood of the Ennoree. Some days after the escape of Butler, the miller's own family had drawn upon themselves the odium of the ruling authority. His mill and his habitation had been reduced to ashes, by a party of Tories who had made an incursion into this district, with no other view than to wreak their vengeance against suspected persons. In the same inroad, the family of David Ramsay had once more been assailed,—and all that was spared from the first conflagration was destroyed in the second. Many other houses through this region had met the same fate. The expedition had been conducted by Wemyss, who, it is said, carried in his pocket a list of

dwellings to which the torch was to be applied, and who on accomplishing each item of his diabolical mission,—so still runs the tradition,—would note the consummated work, by striking out the memorandum from his tablets.

In this general ravage, the desolated families fled like hunted game through the woods, and betook themselves, with a disordered haste, to the more friendly provinces northward. Musgrove had sent his wife and younger children, almost immediately after the assault upon him, to the care of a relative in Virginia, whither they had been conducted, some days previous to the date of his present meeting with Horse Shoe, by Christopher Shaw,—whilst he and Mary had remained behind, for a short space, to render assistance to the family of Ramsay,—to whom they felt themselves affined almost as closely as if the expected alliance by marriage had taken place. When this duty was discharged, and Ramsay's family were provided with a place of refuge, Musgrove had set forward with his daughter to rejoin his wife and children in their new asylum. It was upon this journey that they had now been accidentally overtaken by our travellers.

The disclosure of the motives of Mildred's expedition, to Mary and her father, as may be supposed, warmed up their feelings to a most affectionate sympathy in her troubles. They had often heard of Butler's attachment to a lady in Virginia,—and were aware of her name, from the incidents that had occurred, at the trial of Butler, and from the nature of Horse Shoe's mission to Virginia.—Mary had nursed in her mind a fanciful and zealous interest in behalf of the lady who was supposed to have engrossed Butler's affections, from the earnest devotion which she had witnessed in his demeanour, first, at Adair's, and often afterwards during his captivity. The effect of this preconceived favour now showed itself in her behaviour to Mildred; and, in the gentle play which it gave to her kindly sentiments, a most happy change was wrought in her present feelings. She, at once, warmly and fervently attached herself to Mildred, and won her way into our lady's esteem by the most amiable assiduities. In these offices of love, the poignancy of her

own grief began to give way to the natural sweetness of her temper, and they were observed, in the same degree, to enliven Mildred's feelings.—Mary hung fondly about her new acquaintance,—proffered her the most minute attentions of comfort,—spoke often of the generous qualities of Butler,—and breathed many a sincere prayer for future happiness to him and those he loved.

As Mildred pondered over the new aspect which the tidings of this evening had given to her condition, her inclination and duty both prompted her to the resolve to make an effort to join Butler, instead of returning to the Dove Cote. She was apprised by Musgrave that the prisoner had been conducted to Ferguson, who, she was told, was at this time stationed in the neighbourhood of Gilbert town—not a hundred miles from her present position. She had ventured far in his service, and she could not, now that she had so nearly approached him, consent to abandon the effort of reaching the spot of his captivity. She thought with alarm over the dangers that might await him, in consequence of his previous escape, and this alarm was increased by her remembrance of the tone of bitter resentment with which Cornwallis, in a moment of unguarded feeling, had referred to that event in her late conference with that officer. Above all, it was her duty:—such was her view of the matter,—and whatever might beset, he was the lord of her heart,—and all dangers and difficulties, now as heretofore, should be cast aside in her determination to minister to his safety or comfort.—Her decision was made, and she so announced it to her companions.

Neither the sergeant nor Henry made the opposition to this resolve that might have been expected. To Horse Shoe, it was a matter of indifference upon what service he might be ordered:—his thoughts ran in no other current than to obey the order, and make the most thrifty and careful provision for its safe execution. To Henry, that was always a pleasant suggestion which was calculated to bring him more into the field of adventure. Allen Musgrave, on this occasion, added an opinion which rather favoured the enterprise.—‘It was not much out of

the way,'—he said,—‘to go as far as Burk Court House, where, at least, the lady was likely to learn something of the plans of Ferguson,—and she might either wait there, or take such direction afterwards as her friends should advise.’

Mary begged that whatever route Mildred thought proper to pursue, she might be allowed to accompany her; and this request was so much to the liking of Mildred, that she earnestly implored the miller’s consent to the plan. With some reluctance Musgrove acquiesced,—and, feeling thus doubly interested in the fortunes of the party, he finally determined himself to attend them in their present enterprise.

These matters being settled, the wearied travellers parted for the night—happy, at least, in having found the weight of their personal afflictions relieved by the cheerfulness with which the burden was divided.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SIGNS OF A GATHERING STORM.—MUSTER OF THE BACKWOODSMEN.

In arms the huts and hamlets rise,
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They pour'd each hardy tenant down.

Lady of the Lake.

IN gathering up the ends of our story, as we draw towards a conclusion, we are forced, after the fashion of a stirring drama, to a frequent change of scene. Accordingly, leaving Mildred and her friends to pursue their own way until we shall find leisure to look after their footsteps, we must introduce our reader to some new acquaintances whose motions, it will be seen, are destined greatly to influence the interests of this history.

The time was about the second of October, when a considerable body of troops were seen marching through that district which is situated between the Allegany mountain and the head waters of Catawba, in North Carolina. This force might have numbered, perhaps, something over one thousand men. Its organization and general aspect were

sufficiently striking to entitle it to a particular description. It consisted almost entirely of cavalry, and a spectator might have seen in the rude, weather-beaten faces and muscular forms of the soldiers, as well as in the simplicity of their equipments, a hastily-levied band of moun-
taineers, whose ordinary pursuits had been familiar with the arduous toils of Indian warfare, and the active labours of the chace. They were, almost without exception, arrayed in the hunting shirt,—a dress so dear to the recollections of the revolution, and which, it is much to be regretted, the foppery of modern times has been allowed to displace. Their weapons, in but few instances, were other than the long rifle and its accompanying hunting-knife.

It was to be observed that this little army consisted of various corps, which were in general designated either by the colour of the hunting-shirt, or by that of the fringe with which this cheap and simple uniform was somewhat ostentatiously garnished. Some few were clad in the plain, homespun working-dress of the time;—and, here and there, an officer might be recognized in the blue and buff cloth of the regular continental army. The buck skin, also, was an almost indispensable ornament of the cap or usual round hat of the soldiers,—and where this was wanting, its place was not unfrequently supplied by sprigs of green pine, or holly, or other specimens of the common foliage of the country.

The men were mounted on lean, shaggy and travel-worn horses of every variety of size, shape, and colour; and their baggage consisted of nothing more cumbersome than a light wallet attached to the rear of their saddles,—or of a meagerly supplied pair of saddlebags. The small party on foot were in no wise to be distinguished from the mounted men, except in the absence of horses, and in the mode of carrying their baggage, which was contained in knapsacks of deerskin strapped to their shoulders. These moved over the ground with, perhaps, even more celerity than the cavalry, and appeared in no degree to regret the toil of the march,—which was so far the lighter to them, as they were exempt from the solicitude which

their companions suffered of providing forage for their beasts.

The officers in command of this party were young men, in whose general demeanour and bearing was to be seen that bold, enterprising, and hardy character which, at that period even more than at present, distinguished the frontier population. The frequent expeditions against the savages, which the times had rendered familiar to them, as well as the service of the common war, in which they had all partaken, had impressed upon their exteriors the rugged lines of thoughtful soldiership.

The troops now associated, consisted of distinct bodies of volunteers, who had each assembled, under their own leaders,—without the requisition of the government,—entirely independent of each other, and more resembling the promiscuous meeting of hunters, than a regularly-organized military corps.

They had convened, about a week before the period at which I have presented them to my reader, at Wattauga, on the border of Tennessee, in pursuance of an invitation from Shelby, who was now one of the principal officers in command. He had himself embodied a force of between two and three hundred men, in his own district of the mountains; and colonel Campbell, now also present, had repaired to the rendezvous with four hundred soldiers from the adjoining county in Virginia. These two had soon afterwards formed a junction with colonels M'Dowell and Sevier, of North Carolina, who had thus augmented the joint force to the number which I have already mentioned as constituting the whole array. They had marched slowly and warily from the mountains, into the district of country which lay between the forks of Catawba, somewhere near to the present village of Morgan town,—and might now be said to be rather hovering in the neighbourhood of Ferguson, than advancing directly towards him. The force of the British partisan was, as yet, too formidable for the attack of these allies, and he was still in a position to make his way in safety to the main army under Cornwallis,—at this time stationed at Charlotte, some seventy or eighty miles distant. It was both to gain increase of force, from certain auxillaries

who were yet expected to join them, as also, without exciting suspicion of their purpose, to attain a position, from which Ferguson might more certainly be cut off from Cornwallis, that the mountain leaders lingered with such wily delay upon their march.

Ferguson was all intent upon Clarke,—little suspecting the power which could summon up, with such incredible alacrity, an army from the woods, fit to dispute his passage through any path of the country; and, profiting by this confidence of the enemy, Shelby and his associates were preparing, by secret movement, to put themselves in readiness to spring upon their quarry at the most auspicious moment. In accordance with this plan, colonel Williams, who yet preserved his camp on the Fair Forest, was on the alert to act against the British leader, who still marched farther south,—at every step lengthening the distance between himself and his commander-in-chief, and so far favouring the views of his enemy. Shelby and his comrades only tarried until their numbers should be complete, designing as speedily as possible after that, to form a junction with Williams, and at once enter upon an open and hot pursuit of their adversary.

Their uncertainty in regard to the present condition of Clarke, added greatly to their desire to strike, as early as possible, their meditated blow. This officer had, a few weeks before, commenced his retreat from Augusta through Ninety-Six, with some five hundred men, closely followed by Brown and Cruger, and threatened by the Indian tribes who inhabited the wilderness through which he journeyed. The perils and hardships of this retreat arose not only from the necessity Clarke was under to plunge into the inhospitable and almost unexplored wilderness of the Allegany, by a path which should effectually baffle his pursuers as well as escape the toils of Ferguson,—but they were painfully enhanced by the incumbrance of a troop of women and children, who, having already felt the vengeance of the savages, and fearing its further cruelties and the scarcely less ruthless hatred of the Tories, preferred to tempt the rigours of the mountain rather than remain in their own dwellings. It is said that these ter-

rified and helpless fugitives, amounted to somewhat above three hundred individuals.

There were no incidents of the war of independence, that more strikingly illustrated the heroism which grappled with the difficulties of that struggle at its gloomiest moment, than the patient and persevering gallantry of these brave wanderers and their confederates, whom we have seen lately assembled in arms. History has not yet conferred upon Clarke and his companions their merited tribute of renown. Some future chronicler will find in their exploits a captivating theme for his pen, when he tells the tale of their constancy, even in the midst of the nation's despair, until fortune—at length successfully wooed—rewarded their vigilance, bravery and skill, by enabling them to subdue and destroy the Tory Ascendency in the south.

The enemy, swarming in all the strong places, elate with recent victory, well provided with the muniments of war, high in hope and proud of heart, hunted these scattered, destitute and slender bands with a keenness of scent, swiftness of foot, and exasperation of temper, that can only be compared to the avidity of the blood-hound. This eagerness of pursuit was, for the present, directed against Clarke; and it is one of the most fortunate circumstances that belong to the events I have been relating, that this purpose of waylaying our gallant partisan, so completely absorbed the attention of Ferguson, as to cause him to neglect the most ordinary precautions for securing himself against the reverses of the war.

In this state of things, Shelby and his compatriots waited for the moment when they might direct their march immediately to the attack of the British soldier—their anxiety stimulated to a painful acuteness by the apprehension that Clarke might be overpowered by his enemies, or that Cornwallis might receive information of the gathering bands, and make a timely movement to reinforce or protect his out-post. It was in this moment of doubt and concern, that we have chosen to present them in the course of our narrative.

The troops had halted, about the middle of the day, to take some refreshment. The ground they had chosen

for this purpose was a narrow valley or glen encompassed by steep hills, between which a transparent rivulet wound its way over a rough, stony bed. The margin of the stream was clothed with grass of the liveliest verdure, and a natural grove of huge forest trees covered the whole level space of the valley. The season was the most pleasant of the year, being at that period when, in the southern highlands, the hoar frost is first seen to sparkle on the spray at early dawn. The noon-tide sun, though not oppressively warm, was still sufficiently fervid to render the shade of the grove, and the cool mountain brook in the deep ravine, no unpleasant objects to wearied travellers. Here, the whole of our little army were scattered through the wood; some intent upon refreshing their steeds in the running water; many seated beneath the trees discussing their own slender meals; and not a few carelessly and idly loitering about the grounds in the enjoyment of the mere exemption from the constraint of discipline. The march of the troops on this day had not exceeded ten or twelve miles:—they might have been said to creep through the woods.—Still, however, they had been in motion ever since the dawn of day; and as they measured the ground with their slow but ceaseless footfall, there was a silent disquiet and an eagerness of expectation, that were scarcely less fatiguing than more rapid and laborious operations.

‘Cleveland will certainly join us?’—said Shelby, as, in the vacancy of the hour, he had fallen into company with his brother officers, who were now assembled on the margin of the brook.—‘It is time he were here.—I am sick of this slow work.—If we do not make our leap within the next two or three days, the game is lost.’—

‘Keep your temper, Isaac,’—replied Campbell, who, being somewhat older than his comrade, assumed the freedom indicated in this reply, and now laughed as he admonished the fretful soldier,—‘keep your temper!—Williams is below and on the look out; and most usefully employed in enticing Ferguson as far out of reach of my lord Buzzard, there at Charlotte, as we could wish him.—Ben Cleveland will be with us, all in good time:—

take my word for that. You forget that he had to muster his lads from Wilkes and Surry both.'

'And Brandon and Lacy are yet to join us,'—said McDowell.

'Damn it! they should be here, man!'—interrupted Shelby again,—'I hate this creaking of my boots upon the soft grass as if I had come here to fish for gudgeons.—I am for greasing our horses' heels and putting them to service.'—

'You were always a hot-headed devil,'—interrupted Campbell, again,—'and have wasted more shoe-leather than discretion in this world, by at least ten to one. You are huntsman enough to know, Isaac, that it is sometimes well to steal round the game to get the wind of him. Your headlong haste would only do us harm.'—

'You!'—rejoined Shelby, with a laugh, excited by Campbell's face of good humour—'Verily, you are a pattern of sobriety and moderation yourself, to be preaching caution to us youngsters!—All wisdom, forecast and discretion, I suppose, have taken up their quarters in your wiry-haired noddle! How in the devil, it came to pass, William, that yonder green and grey shirts should have trusted themselves with such a piece of prudence at their head, is more than I can guess.'

At this moment a soldier pressed forward into the circle of officers:—

'A letter for colonel Shelby,'—he said,—'brought by a trooper from Cleveland.'—

'Ah, ha!—This looks well,'—exclaimed Shelby, as he ran his eyes over the lines.—'Cleveland is but ten miles behind and desires us to wait his coming.'—

'With how many men?'—asked one of the party.

'The rogue has forgotten to tell.—I'll warrant, with all he could find.'

'With a good party, no doubt,'—interrupted Sevier.—'I know the Whigs of Wilkes and Surry will not be backward.'—

'From this despatch, gentlemen, I suppose we shall rest here for the night,—what say you?'—was the interrogatory proposed to the group by Shelby.

The proposition was agreed to,—and the several officers repaired to their commands. As soon as this order was communicated to the troops, every thing assumed the bustle incident to the preparation of a temporary camp. Fires were kindled, the horses tethered, guards detailed, and shelters erected of greenwood cut from the surrounding forest. In addition to this, a few cattle were slaughtered from a small herd that had been driven in the rear of the march; and, long before night came on, the scene presented a tolerably comfortable bivouac of light-hearted, laughing woodsmen, whose familiar habits at home had seasoned them to this forest-life, and gave to their present enterprise something of the zest of a pastime.

In the first intervals of leisure, parties were seen setting out into the neighbouring hills in pursuit of game, and when the hour of the evening meal arrived, good store of fat bucks and wild turkeys were not wanting to flavour a repast, to which a sauce better than the wit of man ever invented, was brought by every lusty feeder of the camp.

At sun-down, a long line of woodland cavalry, in all respects armed and equipped in the same fashion with those who already occupied the valley, were seen winding down the rugged road which led from the high grounds to the camp. At the first intimation of the approach of this body the troops below were ordered out on parade, and the new-comers were received with all the military demonstrations of respect and joy usual at the meeting of friendly bodies of soldiers. Some dozen horns of the harshest tones, and with the most ear-piercing discord, kept up an incessant braying, until the alarmed echoes were startled from a thousand points amongst the hills.—In spite of the commands of officers, straggling shots of salutation were fired, and loud greetings of individual acquaintances were exchanged from either ranks, as the approaching body filed across the whole front of the drawn-up line. When this ceremony was over, colonel Cleveland rode up to the little group of officers who awaited his report, and, after a long and hearty welcome, announced his command to consist of

three hundred and fifty stout hearts, ready and tried friends to the issues of the war.

The force of the confederates, by this accession, now amounted to about fourteen hundred men. It became necessary, at this juncture, to give to these separate bands a more compact character, and with that view it was indispensable that the command of the whole should be committed to one of the present leaders. In the difficulty and delicacy of selecting an individual for this duty, the common opinion inclined to the propriety of submitting the appointment to general Gates. A messenger was accordingly despatched on that night, to repair to the American head-quarters at Hillsborough, to present this subject to the attention of the general. In the meantime, Shelby whose claim, perhaps, to the honour of leading the expedition was most worthy of consideration, with that patriotic and noble postponement of self, which occurs so frequently in the history of the men of the revolution, himself suggested the expediency of conferring the command upon his friend Campbell, until the pleasure of Gates should be known. The suggestion was heartily adopted, and colonel William Campbell was accordingly from this moment, the chosen leader of our gallant and efficient little army.

On the following day the troops were in motion at an early hour—designing to advance with a steady pace towards Gilbert town, and thence on the track of the enemy across the border into South Carolina. In the course of the forenoon, the vanguard were met by a small body of horsemen, whose travel-worn plight and haggard aspects showed that they had lately been engaged in severe service. They were now in quest of the very party whom they had thus fortunately encountered upon the march; and it was with a lively demonstration of joy, that they now rode with the officer of the guard into the presence of Campbell and his staff. Their report announced them to be major Chandler and captain Johnson, of Clarke's party, who, with thirty followers, had been despatched from the western side of the Allegany, to announce to the confederated troops, the complete success of that officer's endeavour to reach the settlements

on the Nolachuckie and Wattauga rivers. Their tidings were immediately communicated to the army, and the deep and earnest interest which officers and men took in this agreeable intelligence, was evinced in a spontaneous acclamation and cheering from one extremity of the column to the other. The messengers proceeded to narrate the particulars of their late hazardous expedition, and fully confirmed the most painful anticipations which the listeners had previously entertained of the difficulties, toils and sufferings incident to the enterprise. Clarke's soldiers, they further reported, were too much disabled to be in condition immediately to recross the mountain and unite in the present movement against Ferguson,—but that, as soon as they should find themselves recruited by needful rest, they would lose no time in repairing to the scene of action.

Towards sunset of the succeeding day, our sturdy adventurers entered Gilbert town. This post had been abandoned by Ferguson, and was now in the occupation of the two staunch Whig leaders, Brandon and Lacy, at the head of about three hundred men, who had repaired to this place from the adjacent mountains of Rutherford, to await the arrival of Campbell and his friends. It was manifest that affairs were rapidly tending towards a crisis. Ferguson had heretofore appeared indifferent to the dangers that threatened him, and his movements indicated either a fatal contempt for his adversary, or an ignorance of the extent of his embarrassments,—each equally discreditable to the high renown which has been attributed to him for careful and bold soldiership.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MILDRED MEETS AN AGREEABLE ADVENTURE.

We left Mildred securely lodged with her new and kind-hearted friends, under the hospitable roof of the farmer, hard by the Yadkin. The reader has, doubtless,

found reason in the course of this narrative, to marvel much that a lady, so delicately nurtured, should, with so stout a spirit and with such singular devotion, have tempted so many dangers, and exposed herself to such unwonted hardships, for the sake of the man she loved. Perhaps, I might be able to clear up this matter, by referring to the extraordinary conjuncture of circumstances that surrounded her. It was no secret that she fervently, and with her whole heart,—yea even with a fanatical worship,—loved the man she sought. Her affection had been nursed in solitude, and, like a central fire, glowed with a fervid heat, unobserved, at first, silent and steady: and by degrees her enthusiasm spread its colouring over this passion, and raised it into a fanciful but solemn self-dedication. This warmth of feeling might still have been witnessed only within her family precinct, had it not been that, at a most critical moment, when her father's absence from the Dove Cote left her without other resource than her own unaided counsel, she was made acquainted that her lover's life was in imminent peril, and that a word from her might perhaps avert his doom. We have seen with what anxious alacrity she set forth in that emergency upon her pilgrimage of duty, and how, as she became familiar with hardship and danger, her constancy and resolution still took a higher tone, growing more vigorous even with the impediments that lay across her path. This may seem strange to our peace-bred dames,—and little congruous with that feminine reserve and shrinkingness which we are wont to praise.—But war, distress and disaster work miracles in the female bosom, and render that virtuous and seemly, which ease and safety might repel. Nature is a wise and cunning charmer,—and, in affliction, makes that forwardness not unlovely, which in tranquil and happy times she would visit with her censure.—If these considerations do not suffice to explain the present movements of my heroine, I must beg my reader to have patience to the end, when, peradventure, he will find a still better reason.

When morning came, Mildred was up with the first blush of light. Her thoughts had dwelt, with a busy restlessness, upon the late intelligence,—and she had slept

only in short and disturbed intervals. She was impatient to be again upon the road.

Accordingly, as soon as the preparations for their journey could be made, our party, now increased by the addition of Musgrove and his daughter, set forward on their travel towards Burk Court House.

This journey was protracted through several days. The disturbed state of the country, produced by the active hostilities which were now renewed, made it prudent for our warfarers frequently to halt amongst the friendly inhabitants of the region through which they travelled, in order to obtain information,—or wait for the passage of troops whose presence might have caused embarrassment.

The considerate kindness of Allen Musgrove, and the unwearied attentions of Mary, who, softened by her own griefs, evinced a more touching sympathy for the sufferings of Mildred, every day increased the friendship which their present companionship had engendered, and greatly beguiled the road of its tediousness and discomfort.

The journey, however, was not without its difficulties, nor altogether destitute of occurrences of interest to this history. The upper districts of North Carolina present to the eye a very beautiful country, diversified by mountain and valley, and girted in general with a rich soil. Considerable portions of this region were consequently occupied and put into cultivation at an early period of the history of the province; and, at the era of the revolution, were noted as the most desirable positions for the support of the southern armies. This circumstance had drawn the war to that quarter, and had induced a frequent struggle to retain a footing there, by each party who came into the possession of it. Such a state of things had now, as we have before remarked, embarrassed the progress of our friends, and had even compelled them to diverge largely from the direct route of their journey.

It happened, a few days after leaving the Yadkin, that the hour of sunset found our little troop pursuing a road through the deep and gloomy forest, which, for several miles past had been unrelieved by any appearance of

human habitation. Neither Horse Shoe nor Allen Musgrove possessed any acquaintance with the region, beyond the knowledge that they were upon what was called the upper or mountain road, that extended from Virginia entirely through this section of North Carolina; and that they could not be much more than fifteen or twenty miles north of Burk Court House. Where they should rest during the night that was now at hand, was a matter that depended entirely upon chance; and stimulated by the hope of encountering some woodland cabin, they persevered in riding forward, even when the fading twilight had so obscured their path, as to make it a matter of some circumspection to pick their way. Thus the night stole upon them almost unaware.

There is nothing so melancholy as the deep and lonely forest at night; and, why it should be so, I will not stop to inquire, but that melancholy, it seems to me, is enhanced by the chilliness of the autumnal evening. The imagination peoples the impenetrable depths of the wood with spectres, which the gibbering and shrill reptiles that inhabit these recesses, seem to invest with a voice;—the earth beneath the feet, carpeted with ‘the raven down of darkness,’ has an indefinite surface that causes the traveller to think of pitfalls and sudden banks, and fearful quagmires—and the grey light of the glow-worm, or the cold gleam of the rotten timber shine up through the gloom, like some witch-taper from a haunted ground. Then, high above the head, the sombre forms of the trees nod in the night-wind, and the stars,—ineffectual to guide us on our way—are seen only in short and rapid glimpses through the foliage: all these things affect the mind with sadness—but the chattering of the teeth and the cold creep of the blood, rendered sluggish by a frosty atmosphere, make it still more sad.

Mildred and Mary Musgrove experienced a full share of these imaginings, as they now rode in the dark, side by side; and, peradventure, an occasional expression of impatience might have been heard, in whispers, between them. By degrees, this feeling extended to Henry,—and, in due course of time, seemed also to have reached the sergeant and the miller;—for these two, as if suddenly

struck with the necessity of making some provision for the night, now came to a halt, with a view to inquire into the comfort of the weaker members of the troop, and to deliberate on what was best to be done. To make a fire, erect a tent, and resort to the contents of their havresacs for a supper, were the only expedients which their situation afforded; and as these arrangements were but the customary incidents of travel, in the times to which we refer, they were now resolved upon with but little sense of inconvenience or hardship. It was proper, however, that the party should encamp in some position where they might have water, and, with that object, they continued to move forward until they should find themselves in the neighbourhood of a running stream—an event that, from the nature of the country, was soon likely to occur.

'There can be no moon to-night,'—said the sergeant, as they rode along in quest of their lodging-place,—'yet yonder light would look as if she was rising.—No—it can't be ~~for~~ it is westward, as I judge, Allen.'

'It is westward,'—replied Musgrove, looking towards a faint light which brought the profile of the tree-tops into relief against the horizon.—'There must be fire in the woods.'

The party rode on, all eyes being directed to the phenomenon pointed out by Horse Shoe. The light grew broader and flung a lurid beam towards the zenith, and, as the travellers still came nearer, the radiance increased and illuminated the summit of a hill which, it was now apparent, lay between them and the light.

'We must rest here for a while,'—said the sergeant, reining up his horse in a dark and narrow ravine,—'the fire is just across this hill in front,—it would be wise to reconnoitre a little,—there may be travellers camping on the t'other side—or troops, for aught we know;—or it may be an old fire left by the last persons that passed.—You, Allen Musgrove, stay here with the women, and I will ride forward to look into the matter.'

Henry accompanied the sergeant, and they both galloped up the hill.—When they came to the top, a rich and strange prospect broke upon their sight.—Some three or four hundred yards in advance, at the foot of the long slope of the hill,

a huge volume of flame was discovered enveloping the entire trunk of a tall pine, and blazing forth with sudden flashes amongst the withered foliage. The radiance cast around, from this gigantic torch, penetrated the neighbouring forest, and lit up the trees with a lustre more dazzling than that of day,—whilst the strong shades brought into such immediate proximity with the sharp, red light, as it glanced upon every upright stem or trunk, gave a new and grotesque outline to the familiar objects of the wood. The glare fell upon the sward of the forest, and, towards the rear, upon a sheet of water, which showed the conflagration to have been kindled on the bank of some river. Not less conspicuous than the local features of the scene, were the figures of a considerable party of soldiers, passing to and fro, in idle disarray, through the region of the light—and a short distance from them, a number of horses attached to the branches of the neighbouring trees. Horse Shoe and his young companion stood gazing, for some moments, upon the spectacle—the sergeant in silent conjecture and perplexed thoughtfulness, as to the character of the persons below—Henry intent only upon the novel and picturesque beauty of the view.

The light shone directly up the road, and fell upon the persons of our two friends,—a circumstance to which the sergeant seemed to give no heed, until Henry pointed out to him a horseman, from the direction of the fire, who was now advancing towards them:—

‘Sergeant, turn back into the shade,’—cried Henry—‘that man is coming after us:’—

‘Keep your ground,’—replied Horse Shoe,—‘he has no ill-will to us.—He wears the dress of an honest man and a good soldier.’

‘Who goes there?’—called out the horseman, as he now came within speaking distance.—‘Stand and tell me who you are?’—

‘Friends to the hunting-shirt and buck-tail,’—replied Robinson.

‘I am glad to hear you say so,’—rejoined the Scout, as he advanced still nearer.—‘Where from, and in what direction do you travel?’—

'That should be William Scoresby's voice, of the Amherst Rangers,'—shouted Henry, with animation:—'as I live it is the very, man!'

'Who have we here?'—returned the horseman.—'Henry Lindsay!—Our deputy corporal! In God's name, man, where did you spring from?'—he added in a tone of joyful surprise, as he offered Henry his hand.—

'Ho, sister Mildred,—Mr. Musgrove!'—exclaimed Henry, calling out, at the top of his voice, to his friends, who were waiting behind for intelligence.—'Come up—come up!—Here's good luck!'

And with a continued vociferation he galloped back until he met his sister and conducted her to the top of the hill, whence, following the guidance of William Scoresby, the party descended to the bivouac of the Amherst Rangers.

Henry eagerly sought out Stephen Foster, and, having brought him into the presence of Mildred, received from him a narrative of the course of events which had led to this fortunate meeting.

The Rangers had marched from Virginia a few days after Mildred had left the Dove Cote. They had fallen in with Gates' shattered army at Hillsborough, where, after tarrying almost a fortnight, they were furnished an opportunity to take some active share in the operations of the day, by the enterprise of Shelby against Ferguson,—the knowledge of which had reached them at Gates' headquarters, whither a messenger from Shelby had come to ask for aid. The Rangers had accordingly volunteered for this service, and with the permission of the general, were now on their way towards Burk Court House, there hoping to receive intelligence that would enable them to join the allies.

They had, for some miles, been marching along the same road taken by our travellers,—not more than two hours ahead of them; and having reached the Catawba, near sun-down, had determined to encamp there for the night. The soldiers, unaccustomed to exact discipline, had, in sport, set fire to a tall pine which some accident of the storm had killed, and produced the conflagration

that had lighted Horse Shoe and his charge to the scene of the present meeting.

It may be imagined that this incident afforded great satisfaction to Mildred and her party, who were thus brought into connection with a numerous body of friends, with whom they determined henceforth to pursue their journey. The first good result of this encounter was immediately experienced in the comfortable though rude accommodation, which the prompt and united efforts of the Rangers supplied to Mildred and her friend Mary Musgrove, in enabling them to pass a night of sound and healthful sleep.

On the following day, the Rangers and their new companions arrived at Burk Court House. They were here made acquainted with the fact that the mountain-troops were at this time moving towards Gilbert town. They accordingly, after a night's rest, resumed their march, and by a toilsome journey, through a rugged mountain district, succeeded on the third evening in reaching the little village which had, but a short time since, been the head-quarters of Ferguson, and the spot of Arthur Butler's captivity.

They were now in advance of Campbell and his mountaineers; and, in waiting for these troops, they were afforded leisure to recruit themselves from the effects of their late fatigues. Good quarters were obtained for Mildred and her companions. She required repose and profited by the present opportunity to enjoy it.

The village was at this moment full of troops. Brandon and Lacy, with their followers, whom we have referred to in the last chapter, were already there, in daily expectation of the arrival of the confederates; and amongst these men sergeant Robinson and his companion the miller, found the means of relieving the tediousness of delay—to say nothing of Henry, who had now become so decidedly martial in his inclinations, that the camp was to him a scene of never-fading interest.

In two days, Campbell's army entered the village, after a march of which we have already given a sketch to our reader. It was a duty of early concern, on the part of Allen Musgrove and the sergeant, to apprise him of

the presence of Mildred and her brother, and to communicate to him the singular purpose of her mission. The effect of this was a visit by Campbell, Shelby and Williams to the lady, on the evening of their arrival. The two latter of these officers had already been personally active in behalf of Arthur Butler, and all felt the liveliest interest in his fortunes. The singular relation in which Mildred seemed to stand to the captive officer, and the extraordinary zeal which her present mission betrayed in his cause, drew forth a warm sympathy from the generous soldiers around her; and there was even a tincture of the romance of chivalry in the fervour with which on the present visit they pledged themselves to her service. With the delicacy that always belongs to honourable and brave hearts, they refrained from inquiry into the special inducements which could so earnestly enlist the lady in the service of their fellow-soldier, and sedulously strove to raise her spirits into a cheerful and happy tone by the hopes they were able to inspire.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FERGUSON ADVANCES SOUTH.—HE HAS REASON TO BECOME CIRCUM-SPECT.—ARTHUR BUTLER FINDS HIMSELF RETREATING FROM HIS FRIENDS.

WE return for a moment to look after Butler. As near as my information enables me to speak—for I wish to be accurate in dates—it was about the 23d of September when our hero arrived at Gilbert town, and found himself committed to the custody of Ferguson. His situation, in many respects uncomfortable, was not altogether without circumstances to alleviate the rigour of captivity. Ferguson, though a rough soldier, and animated by a zealous partisanship in the royal cause, which imbued his feelings with a deep hatred of the Whigs, was also a man of education, and of a disposition to respect the claims of a gentleman, fully equal to himself in rank and consideration,—even when these qualities were found in an enemy. His intercourse, of late

had been almost entirely confined to the wild spirits who inhabited the frontier, and who, impelled by untamed passions, were accustomed to plunge into every excess which the license of war enabled them to practice. He had, accordingly, adapted his behaviour to the complexion of this population, and maintained his authority, both over his own recruits, and such of the opposite party as had fallen into his hands, by a severe, and not unfrequently by even a cruel bearing. Following the example set him by Cornwallis himself, he had, more than once, executed summary vengeance upon the Whigs whom the chances of war had brought into his power, or,—what was equally reprehensible,—had allowed the Tory bands who had enlisted under his banner, to gratify their own thirst of blood in the most revolting barbarities. Towards Butler, however, he demeaned himself with more consideration—and sometimes even extended to him such little courtesies, as might be indulged without risk to the principal purpose of his safe custody. A separate room was provided for the prisoner, and he was allowed the occasional services of Harry Winter and the other companions of his late misfortune. Still, the familiar scenes of suffering and death which Butler was constrained to witness amongst his compatriots, and the consciousness of his own inability to avert these calamities, greatly weighed upon his spirits. His persuasion, too, that Ferguson was now aiding, by what seemed to be a most effectual participation, in the plan for the capture of Clarke,—and his belief that this blow would sadly afflict, if not altogether dishearten the friends of independence in the South, added to his private grief. He knew nothing of the mustering of the mountaineers, and saw no hope of extrication from the difficulties that threatened to overwhelm his cause.

Such was the condition of Butler, during the first four or five days of his captivity at Gilbert town. At the end of this period, circumstances occurred to raise in his bosom the most lively excitement. Suddenly, an order was issued for the immediate movement of the army southward—and the prisoners were directed to accompany the march. It was apparent that information of importance

had been received, and that some decisive event was at hand. When, in pursuance of this command, the troops were marshalled for their journey, and Butler was stationed in the column, along with all the other prisoners of the post, he was startled to observe the dragoon, James Curry, appear in the ranks, as one regularly attached to the corps. Butler had seen nor heard nothing of this man since he had parted from him at Blackstock's after the battle of Musgrove's mill; and his conviction, that, acting under the control of some higher authority, this individual had been the principal agent in his present misfortunes, gave him a painful anxiety in regard to the future. This anxiety was far from being diminished, when he now discovered that the same person, with a party of dragoons, was especially entrusted with his guardianship. Winter and the other troopers who had, until this moment, been allowed to keep him company, were now directed to take a station amongst the common prisoners, and Butler was furnished with his horse, and commanded to submit to the particular supervision of the dragoon. These arrangements being made, the march of Ferguson commenced.

The army moved cautiously towards the upper sections of the district of Ninety-Six. It was evident to Butler, from the frequent hints dropped in conversation by the royalist officers, that Ferguson supposed himself to be getting, every moment, nearer to Clarke. In this state of suspense and weariness the first day's march was concluded.

The second was like the first.—Ferguson still moved south, slowly, but steadily. Every man that was met upon the road was questioned, by the commanding officer, to ascertain whether there was any report of troops westward.—‘Had any crossed Saluda—or been heard of towards the mountains?’—was an invariable interrogatory.—

None, that the person questioned, knew of—was the common reply.

‘Tush! the devil's in it—that we can hear nothing of the fellow?’—exclaimed Ferguson, after the fifth or sixth wayfarer had been examined.—‘Clarke and his beggars

are flesh and blood—they travel by land, and not through the air! Faith, I begin to think Cruger has saved us trouble, and has got his hand on the runaway's croup!—James Curry?—

The dragoon rode to the front and bowed.—

‘You left Fort Ninety-Six only on Wednesday?’

‘I did.’

‘Where was Cruger then?’

‘Marching towards Saluda, with Brown—following Clarke, as it was supposed—but on rather a cold scent as one of the couriers reported?’—

‘Humph!—I must get still nearer to the mountains,’—said Ferguson, as he clenched his teeth and seemed absorbed in thought.—

In a short time after this, the column diverged from their former course by a road that led westward.

Thus ended the second day.

During the next two days, Ferguson had become manifestly more circumspect in his movement, and spent the greater portion of this interval upon a road which was said to extend from Ninety-Six, to the Allegany mountain.—Here he remained, with the wariness of the tiger that prepares to spring upon his prey; and it was with a petulant temper that, after this anxious watch for forty-eight hours, he turned upon his heel and summoned his officers around him, and announced his determination to penetrate still farther into the forest. Like a man perplexed and peevish with crosses, he soon changed his mind, and ordered a lieutenant of cavalry into his presence.—

‘Take six of your best appointed men,’—he said,—‘and send one half of them up this road towards the mountains—the other half southward,—and command them not to stop until they bring me some news of this night-hawk, Clarke.—Let them be trusty men that you can depend upon. I will wait but twenty-four hours for them.—Meantime,’—he added, turning to another officer present,—‘I will send a courier after Cruger, who shall find him if he is above ground?’—

The following day,—which brings us to the third of October—a decisive change took place in the aspect of affairs. Before either of the scouts that had been lately

despatched had returned, a countryman was brought into Ferguson's camp, who, being submitted to the usual minute examination, informed the questioners, that some thirty miles, in the direction of Fort Ninety-Six, he had met upon the road a large party of cavalry under the command of colonel Williams,—and that that officer had shown great anxiety to learn whether certain Whig troops had been seen near Gilbert town. The informant added, that 'Williams appeared to him to be strangely particular in his inquiries about Ferguson.'

This intelligence seemed suddenly to awaken the British partisan from a dream. He was now one hundred miles south of Cornwallis:—and, both east and west of the line of communication between them, it was apparent that hostile parties were assembling, with a view to some united action against him. It struck him now, for the first time, that an enemy might be thrown between the main army at Charlotte and his detachment, and thus cause him some embarrassment in his retreat—but it was still with the scorn of a presumptuous soldier, that he recured to the possibility of his being forced to fight his way.

'They are for turning the tables on me,'—he said, in a tone of derision,—'and hope to pounce upon my back, whilst I am taken up with this half-starved and long-legged fellow of the mountains.—But I will show them who is master, yet!'

In this temper he commenced his retreat, which was conducted slowly and obstinately; and it may be supposed that Butler, as he involuntarily followed the fortunes of his enemy, contemplated these movements with an anxious interest. The common report of the camp made him acquainted with the circumstances which had recommended the retreat, and he, therefore, watched the course of events in momentary expectation of some incident of great importance to himself.

At night, Ferguson arrived at the Cowpens, just twenty-four hours in advance of his enemies. Whilst resting here, he received intelligence of the stout array that had lately assembled at Gilbert town, and which, he was now told, were in full pursuit of him. It was, at first, with an

incredulous ear that he heard the report of the numbers of this suddenly-levied mountain-army. It seemed incredible that such a host could have been convened in such brief space and with such secret expedition—and even more unworthy of belief, that they could have been found in the wild and thinly-peopled regions of the Alleghany. His doubt, however, yielded to his fear, and induced him to accelerate his pace.

His first care was to despatch, on that night, a courier to Cornwallis, to inform the general of his situation, and ask for reinforcements. The letter which bore this request is still extant, and will show that even in the difficult juncture in which we have presented the writer of it, his boastful confidence had not abandoned him.

Before the succeeding dawn, he was again in motion, directing his hasty march towards the Cherokee Ford of Broad river. This point he reached at sun-down. His journey had been pursued, thus far, with unremitting industry.—If his motions had corresponded to his affected disesteem of his enemy, he would here have halted for rest,—but like one who flies with the superstitious dread of a goblin follower, the retreating partisan looked over his shoulder with an unquiet spirit, and made a sign to his companions still to press forward. They crossed the river at night, and did not halt again until they had traversed some six or eight miles beyond the further bank.

The anxiety, suspense and eager expectation of Butler increased with these thickening demonstrations of the approach of a period which he foresaw must be decisive, not only of his own hopes, but, in a great degree, of the hopes of his country. The retreat of Ferguson towards King's Mountain, which now lay but a few miles in advance, was a visible and most striking type of the vanishing power, which for a brief half-year had maintained its domination over the free spirits of the south,—and which had aimed, by a cruel and bloody rule, to extinguish all that was generous and manly in these afflicted provinces.

Contenting myself with this rapid survey of events which, of themselves, possess an interest that would, if

time and space permitted me, have justified the detail of a volume, I go back to the regular current of my story.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE WHIGS CONTINUE THEIR MARCH.—MILDRED IS LEFT BEHIND.

THE army of mountaineers halted at Gilbert town, only until a vidette from Williams brought tidings of Ferguson's late movements. These reached Campbell early in the day succeeding his arrival at the village, and apprised him that Williams followed on the footsteps of the British partisan, and would expect to unite his force with that of the allied volunteers at the Cowpens—(a field not yet distinguished in story)—whither he expected to arrive on the following day. Campbell determined, in consequence, to hasten to this quarter.

The present position of Mildred, notwithstanding the kind sympathy with which every one regarded her, was one that wrought severely upon her feelings. She had heretofore encountered the hardships of her journey, and borne herself through the trials, so unaccustomed to her sex, with a spirit that had quailed before no obstacle. But now, finding herself in the train of an army just moving forth to meet its enemy, with all the vicissitudes and peril of battle in prospect, it was with a sinking of the heart she had not hitherto known, that she felt herself called upon to choose between the alternative of accompanying them in their march, or being left behind. To adopt the first resolve, she was painfully conscious would bring her to witness scenes and perhaps endure privations, the very thought of which made her shudder;—whilst, to remain at a distance from the theatre of events in which she was so deeply concerned, was a thought that suggested many anxious fears not less intolerable than the untried sufferings of the campaign. She had, thus far, braved all dangers for the sake of being near to Butler; and now to hesitate or stay her step, when she had almost reached the very spot of his captivity, and

when the fortunes of war might soon throw her into his actual presence, seemed to her like abandoning her duty at the most critical moment of trial. She was aware that he was in the camp of the enemy;—that this enemy was likely to be overtaken and brought to combat; and it was with a magnified terror that she summoned up to her imagination the possible mischances which might befall Arthur Butler in, the infliction of some summary act of vengeance provoked by the exasperation of conflict:—‘I have tempted the dangers of flood and storm for him,—forest and field—noon-day battle and midnight assault,’—she said, with an earnestness that showed she had shaken all doubts from her mind—‘I have taken my vow of devotion to his safety—to be performed with such fidelity as befits the sacred bond between us.—I will not baulk now, in the last struggle, though perils thicken around me.—I’m prepared for the worst.’

Allen Musgrove, Robinson and Henry combated this resolve with joint expostulation, urging upon Mildred the propriety of her tarrying in the village, at least, until the active operations of the army were terminated,—an event that might be expected in a few days. But it was not until Campbell himself remonstrated with her against the indiscretion of her purpose, and promised to afford her the means of repairing to the scene of action, at any moment she might think her presence there useful, that she relinquished her determination to accompany the army on its present expedition. It was, in consequence, ultimately arranged that she should remain in the quarters provided for her in Gilbert town, attended by the miller and his daughter—whilst a few soldiers were to be detailed as a guard for her person. With this train of attendants, she was to be left at liberty to draw as near to the centre of events, as her considerate and faithful counsellor, Allen Musgrove, might deem safe.

Another source of uneasiness to her arose out of the separation which she was about to endure from the sergeant and her brother Henry. Horse Shoe, swayed by an irresistible and affectionate longing to be present at the expected passage of arms, which might so materially affect the fortunes of his captive fellow-soldier, Butler,

had represented to Mildred the value of the services he might be able to render; and as the friendly solicitude of the miller and his daughter left nothing within their power to be supplied, towards the comfort and protection of the lady, she did not refuse her consent to this temporary desertion,—although it naturally awakened some painful sense of bereavement, at a moment when her excited feelings most required the consolation of friends.

Henry, captivated with the prospect of military adventure, and magnified in his own esteem, by the importance which Stephen Foster and the Rangers playfully assigned to his position in the ranks, had so far lost sight of the special duty he had assumed, as his sister's companion, that he now resolutely rebelled against all attempts to persuade him to remain in the village; and Mildred, at last, upon the pledge of the sergeant to keep the cadet under his own eye, reluctantly yielded to a demand which she found it almost impossible to resist.

These matters being settled; it was not long before Mildred and Mary Musgrove, seated at the window of the house which had been selected as their present abode, saw the long array of the army glide by at a brisk pace, and watched the careless and laughing faces of the soldiers, as they filed off through the only street in the village and took the high road leading south.

The troops had been gone for several hours, and Allen Musgrove and the few soldiers who had been left behind, had scattered themselves over the village, to get rid of the tedium of idleness in the gossip of the scant population which the place afforded. Mildred had retired to a chamber, and Mary loitered from place to place like one disturbed with care. All the party felt that deep sense of loneliness which is so acutely perceptible to those who suddenly change a life of toil and incident, for one of rest, while events of busy interest are in expectation.

‘They are gone, ma’am,’—said Mary, as she now crept into Mildred’s presence, after having travelled over nearly the whole village, in the state of disquietude I have described,—‘they are gone at least twenty miles, I should think, by this time;—and I never would have believed that I could have cared so much about people I never

saw before.—But we are so lonesome, ma'am.—And young mister Henry Lindsay, I should say, must be getting tired by this time of day.—As for the matter of that,—people may get tireder by standing still, than by going on.'—

'How far do they march to-day?'—inquired Mildred,—
'Have you heard your father say, Mary?'

'I heard him and the troopers who are here, allow,'—
replied the maiden,—'that colonel Campbell wouldn't reach Williams before to-morrow afternoon. They said it was good fifty miles travel.—They look like brave men—them that marched this morning, ma'am;—for they went out with good heart. The Lord send that through Him they may be the means of deliverance to major Butler!'

At the mention of this name, Mildred covered her face with her hands, and the tears trickled through her fingers. 'The Lord send it!'—she repeated, after a moment's pause.—'May He, in his mercy, come to our aid!'—Then uncovering her face, and dropping on her knees beside her chair, she whispered a prayer for the success of those who had lately marched forth against the enemy.

When she arose from this posture, she went to the window, and there stood gazing out upon the quiet and unfrequented street,—running over in her mind the perils to which her brother as well as Butler might be exposed, and summoning to her imagination the thousand subjects of solicitude, which her present state of painful expectation might be supposed to create or recall.

'We will set forth early to-morrow,'—she said, addressing herself to her companion.—'So tell your father, Mary. We will follow the brave friends who have left us: I cannot be content to linger behind them. I will sleep in the lowliest hovel, or in the common shelter of the woods, and share all the dangers of the march, rather than linger here in this dreadful state of doubt and silence. Tell your father to make his preparations for our departure to-morrow:—tell him I cannot abide another day in this place.'

'I should think we might creep near them, ma'am,'—

replied Mary,—‘near enough to see and hear what was going on—which is always a great satisfaction—and not get ourselves into any trouble neither. I am sure my father would be very careful of us, and keep us out of harm’s way—come what would. And it is distressing to be so far off, when you don’t know what’s going to turn up. I will seek my father—who I believe is over yonder with the troopers at the shop, talking to the blacksmith—I will go there and try to coax him to do your bidding. I know the troopers want it more than we do,—and they’ll say a word to help it along.’—

‘Say I desire to have it so, Mary.—I can take no refusal.—Here I will not stay longer.’

Mary left the apartment, and as she descended the steps, she fell into a rumination which arrested her progress full five minutes, during which she remained mute upon the stair case.—‘No wonder the poor, dear lady wishes to go!’—was the ejaculation which came, at last, sorrowfully from her heart, with a long sigh—and at the same time tears began to flow.—‘No wonder she wants to be near major Butler, who loves her past the telling of it. If John Ramsay was there,’—she added, sobbing, —‘I would have followed him—followed him—yes, if I died for it!’—

CHAPTER XXXI.

AFFAIRS BEGIN TO DRAW TO A HEAD. PREPARATIONS FOR BATTLE.—
A PICTURE OF THE TWO ARMIES.

AFTER leaving Gilbert town, Campbell moved steadily towards the point at which he proposed to meet Williams, and, by night-fall, had accomplished about one half of the journey. The march furnished Henry Lindsay unalloyed pleasure. Every incident belonging to it awakened the fancies which he had indulged in reference to military life, and he was delighted in the contemplation of this actual accomplishment of some of the many dreams of glory, which his boyish romance had engen-

dered at home. Besides, being a favourite of those in command, he was allowed to ride in the ranks when it suited his pleasure, and to amuse himself with whatever subject of interest the journey afforded; whilst, at the same time, he found his personal ease so much attended to as to leave him but little room to complain of the discomfort or toil of the campaign.

The night was spent in the woods, and it was scarcely day-break, when the exhilarating, though harsh clamour of the horns, summoned the troops to the renewal of their journey, which was pursued until the afternoon, when, about four o'clock, they reached the border of the tract of country known as the Cowpens. Afar off, occupying a piece of elevated ground, Campbell was enabled to descry a considerable body of cavalry, whose standard, dress and equipment, even at this distance, sufficiently made known to him their friendly character,—a fact that was immediately afterwards confirmed by the report of some videttes, who had been stationed upon the road by which Campbell advanced. A brief interval brought the two parties together, and the force of the allied bands was thus augmented by the addition of our gallant friend Williams, at the head of four hundred sturdy companions.

‘Make a short speech of it,’—said Shelby, addressing Williams, after that officer had ridden into the circle of his comrades, and had exchanged with them a friendly greeting,—‘you have been busy, fellow-soldier, whilst we were waiting to see the grass grow.—What has become of the runaway?’—

‘He left this spot but yesterday,’—replied Williams,—‘Ferguson has something of the bull-dog in him:—his retreat, now that he is forced to it, is surly and slow,—he stops to snarl and growl as if he defied us to follow him. If he had but stood his ground here, we should have had him in as pretty a field as one might desire.—Devil thank him for his prudence!—But he is now at the Cherokee Ford of Broad river—so, I conjecture, by the report of my scouts—hard upon thirty miles from here,—on his way towards Charlotte.’

‘Say you so?’—exclaimed Campbell,—‘then, by my faith, we have no time to lose!—Gentlemen, we will rest

but an hour,—and then to it, for a night march. Pick me out your best men and stoutest horses—leave the footmen behind, and the weakest of the cavalry. This fellow may take it into his head to show his heels. If I can but tread upon the tail of the copperhead with one foot, he will throw himself into his coil for fight,—that's the nature of the beast,—and after that, if need be, we can threaten him until all our force arrives.—Shelby, look to the immediate execution of this order.'

'That's glorious, sergeant,'—said Henry, who, with his companion, Robinson, had stolen up to the skirts of the circle of officers during this conference, and had heard Campbell's order.—'I am of this party, whoever goes:—Colonel Campbell,'—he added, with the familiarity of his privilege,—'the Rangers are ready for you, at any rate.'

'There's a mettlesome colt,'—said Campbell, laughing and speaking to the officers around him,—'that bird shows fight before his spurs are grown.—Pray, sir,'—he continued, addressing Henry,—'what command have you?'

'I consider myself answerable for the second platoon of the Amherst Rangers,'—replied Henry, with a waggish sauciness,—'and they march this night, whatever happens.'

'You shall serve with me in the staff, master,'—said Campbell, playfully,—'such fiery young blades must be looked after.—Get your men ready:—you shall go, I promise you.'

Henry, delighted at the notice he had received, rode off with alacrity to spread the news.

The council broke up, and the earliest arrangements were set on foot to make the draught required by the general orders.

Before the day had departed, nine hundred picked men, well mounted and equipped, were seen spurring forward from the line, and taking a position in the column of march, which was now prepared to move. All the principal officers of the army accompanied this detachment, in which were to be seen the Amherst Rangers with their redoubtable recruits, Henry Lindsay and the sergeant.

It rained during the night,—a circumstance that, however it increased the toils of the soldiers, but little abated their speed,—and, an hour before day-break, they had reached the destined point on Broad river:—but the game had disappeared. Ferguson, as we have seen, had pushed his march on the preceding evening beyond this spot, and had taken the road, as it was reported, towards King's mountain, which was not above twelve miles distant.

A few hours were given by Campbell to the refreshment of his troops, who halted upon the bank of the river, where, having kindled their fires and opened their wallets, they soon found themselves in a condition that pleasantly contrasted with the discomforts of their ride during the night. The enemy consisted principally of infantry,—and Campbell, having gained so closely upon their footsteps, felt no doubt of overtaking them in the course of the day. He, therefore, determined to allow his men full time to recruit their strength for the approaching conflict.

The rain had ceased before the dawn. The clouds had fled from the firmament before a brisk and enlivening autumnal breeze, and the sun rose with unusual splendour. It was one of those days which belong to October, clear, cool and exhilarating,—when all animal nature seems to be invigorated by breathing an atmosphere of buoyant health. For more than an hour after the sun had cast his broad beams over the landscape, the wearied encampment was seen stretched in slumber:—the camp-guards only, and some occasional parties on fatigue service, were to be observed in motion. By degrees, the drowsy soldiers woke up, refreshed by the change of weather, no less than by the repose which they had snatched in the short moments of the halt. A general summons, at last, brought every one into motion. By nine o'clock of the morning, the army were in condition to prosecute their march, as little wanting in alacrity or vigour as when they first commenced their labours, and, at the hour designated, they were seen to prick forth upon their way, with an elastic movement that had in it the vivacity of a holiday sport. Even our young martalist, Henry, had become so inured to the toils of the road, that now, with the aid of

a sleep which Horse Shoe had affectionately guarded until the last moment,—to say nothing of a good luncheon of broiled venison, which the boy discussed after he had mounted into his saddle—he might be considered the most light-hearted of the host.

Towards noon, the army reached the neighbourhood of King's mountain. The scouts and parties of the advance had brought information that Ferguson had turned aside from his direct road, and taken post upon this eminence, where, it was evident, he meant to await the attack of his enemy. Campbell, therefore, lost no time in pushing forward, and was soon rewarded with a view of the object of his pursuit. Some two or three miles distant, where an opening through the forest, first gave him a sight of the mass of highland, he could indistinctly discern the array of the adverse army perched on the very summit of the hill.

The mountain consists of an elongated ridge, rising out of the bosom of an uneven country, to the height of perhaps five hundred feet, and presenting a level line of summit or crest, from which the earth slopes down, at its southward termination and on each side, by an easy descent; whilst northward, it is detached from highlands of inferior elevation, by a rugged valley,—thus giving it the character of an insulated promontory, not exceeding a half mile in length. At the period to which our story refers, it was covered, except in a few patches of barren field or broken ground, with a growth of heavy timber, which was so far free from underwood as, in no great degree, to embarrass the passage of horsemen; and through this growth the eye might distinguish, at a considerable distance, the occasional masses of grey rock that were scattered in huge boulders over its ~~summit~~ and sides.

The adjacent region, lying south from the mountain, was partially cleared and in cultivation, presenting a limited range of open ground, over which the ~~march~~ of Campbell might have been revealed, in frequent glimpses, to the British partisan, for some three or four miles.—We may suppose, therefore, that the two antagonists watched each other, during the advance of the approach of army across this district, with emotions of various and deep interest.

Campbell drew, at length, into a ravine which, bounded by low and short hills and shaded by detached portions of the forest, partly concealed his troops from the view of the enemy, who was now not more than half a mile distant. The gorge of this dell or narrow valley opened immediately towards the southern termination of the mountain; and the column halted a short distance within, where a bare knoll, or round, low hill, crowned with rock, jutted abruptly over the road, and constituted the only impediment that prevented each party from inspecting the array of his opponent.

It was an hour after noon, and the present halt was improved by the men in making ready for battle. Meanwhile, the chief officers met together in front, and employed their time in surveying the localities of the ground, upon which they were soon to be brought to action. The knoll, I have described, furnished a favourable position for this observation,—and thither they had already repaired.

I turn from the graver and more important matters which may be supposed to have occupied the thoughts of the leaders, as they were grouped together on the broad rock, to a subject which was, at this moment, brought to their notice by the unexpected appearance of two females on horseback, on the road a full half mile in the rear of the army, and who were now approaching at a steady pace.—They were attended by a man who, even thus far off, showed the sedateness of age; and, a short space behind them, rode a few files of troopers in military array.

It was with mingled feelings of surprise and admiration at the courage which could have prompted her, at such a time, to visit the army, that the party recognized Mildred Lindsay and her attendants, in the approaching cavalcade. These emotions were expressed by them, in the rough and hearty phrase of their habitual and familiar intercourse.

‘Let me beg, gentlemen,’—said Campbell, interrupting them,—‘that you speak kindly and considerately of yonder lady. By my honour, I have never seen man or woman with a more devoted or brave heart. Poor girl!—she has not followed Butler through his afflictions,

and taken her share of suffering, with a spirit that should bring us all to shame. Horse Shoe Robinson, who has squired her to our camp, even from her father's house, speaks of a secret between her and our captive friend, that tells plainly enough to my mind of sworn faith and long-tried love.—As men and soldiers, we should reverence it.—Williams, look carefully to her comfort and safety.—Go, man, at once,—and meet her on the road.—God grant that this day may bring an end to her grief!"

Williams departed on his mission, and when he met the lady, her brother and the sergeant were already in her train.

Allen Musgrove explained the cause of this unlooked-for apparition. The party, in obedience to Mildred's urgent wish, and scarcely less to the content of all the others, had quitted their secluded position at Gilbert town on the preceding morning; and learning, in the course of the day, from persons on the road, that Ferguson had moved northward, the miller had taken a direction across the country, which enabled him to intercept the army at its present post, with little more than half the travel which the circuitous route of the march had required. They had passed the night under a friendly roof, some ten or twelve miles distant, and had overtaken their companions at the critical moment at which they have been introduced to view.

At Mildred's request, she was conducted into the presence of Campbell, who still retained his station on the knoll. A thoughtful and amiable deference was manifested towards her by the assembled soldiers, who received her with many kind and encouraging greetings. That air of perturbation and timidity, which, in spite of all efforts at self-control, the novelty of her position and the consciousness of the dreadful scene at hand, had thrown over her demeanour, gradually began to give way before the assurances and sympathy of her friends,—and, at length, she became sufficiently self-possessed to look around her and mark the events that were in progress.

The important moment of battle drew nigh, and the

several leaders respectfully took their leave of her, with an exhortation to be of good cheer, and to remain at her present post under the charge of her trusty companion, the miller, who was fully instructed by Campbell, as to the course he should take for the lady's safety, in whatever emergency might arise.

Here we leave her for a moment, whilst we cast a glance at the preparations for battle.

It was three o'clock before these arrangements were completed. I have informed my reader, that the mountain terminated immediately in front of the outlet from the narrow dell in which Campbell's army had halted—its breast protruding into the plain only some few hundred paces from the head of the column, whilst the valley, that forked both right and left, afforded an easy passage along the base on either side. Ferguson occupied the very summit, and now frowned upon his foe, from the midst of a host confident in the strength of their position, and exasperated by the pursuit which had driven them into this fastness.

Campbell resolved to assail this post by a spirited attack, at the same moment, in front and on the two flanks. With this intent, his army was divided into three equal parts. The centre was reserved to himself and Shelby; the right was assigned to Sevier and M'Dowell; the left to Cleveland and Williams. These two latter parties were to repair to their respective sides of the mountain,—and the whole were to make the onset, by scaling the heights, as nearly as possible, at the same instant.

The men, before they marched out of the ravine, had dismounted and picquettet their horses under the winding shelter of the hills; and being now separated into detached columns, formed in solid order, they were put in motion to reach their allotted posts. The Amherst Rangers were retained on horseback for such duty as might require speed, and were stationed close in the rear of Campbell's own division, which now merely marched from behind the shelter of the knoll and halted in the view of the enemy, until sufficient delay should be afforded to the flanking divisions to attain their ground.

Mildred, attended by Allen Musgrove and his daughter, still maintained her position on the knoll, and from this height surveyed the preparations for combat with a beating heart. The scene within her view was one of intense occupation. The air of stern resolve that sat upon every brow; the silent but onward movement of the masses of men advancing to conflict; the few brief and quick words of command that fell from the distance upon her ear; the sullen beat of the hoof upon the sod, as an occasional horseman sped, to and fro, between the more remote bodies and the centre division, which yet stood in compact phalanx, immediately below her at the foot of the hill;—then the breathless anxiety of her companions near at hand, and the short note of dread and almost terror that, now and then, escaped from the lips of Mary Musgrove, as the maiden looked eagerly and fearfully abroad over the plain;—all these incidents wrought upon her feelings and caused her to tremble. Yet amidst these novel emotions, she was not insensible to a certain lively and even pleasant interest, arising out of the picturesque character of the spectacle. The gay sunshine striking aslant these moving battalions, lighting up their fringed and many-coloured hunting-shirts, and casting a golden hue upon their brown and weather-beaten faces, brought out into warm relief the chief characteristics of this peculiar woodland army. And Mildred sometimes forgot her fears in the fleeting inspiration of the sight, as she watched the progress of an advancing column,—at one time moving in close ranks with the serried thicket of rifles above their heads, and, at another, displaying into files to pass some narrow path, along which, with trailed arms and bodies bent, they sped with the pace of hunters beating the hill-side for game. The tattered and service-stricken banner, that shook its folds in the wind, above these detached bodies, likewise lent its charm of association to the field,—the silence and steadfastness of the array in which it was borne, and its constant onward motion showing it to be encircled by strong arms and stout hearts.

Turning from these, the lady's eye was raised, with a less joyous glance, towards the position of the enemy.

On the most prominent point of the mountain's crest, she could descry the standard of England fluttering above a concentrated body, whose scarlet uniforms, as the sun glanced upon them through the forest, showed that here Ferguson had posted his corps of regulars, and held them ready to meet the attack of the centre division of the assailants; whilst the glittering of bayonets amidst the dark foliage, at intervals, rearward along the line of the summit, indicated that heavy detachments were stationed in this quarter to guard the flanks. The marching and countermarching of the frequent corps, from various positions on the summit; the speeding of officers on horseback; and the occasional movement of small squadrons of dragoons, who were, at one moment, seen struggling along the sides of the mountain, and, at another, descending towards the base or returning to the summit, disclosed the earnestness and activity of the preparation, with which a courageous soldier may be supposed to make ready for his foe.

It was with a look of sorrowful concern, which brought tears into her eyes, that Mildred gazed upon this host, and strained her vision in the vain endeavour to catch some evidences of the presence of Arthur Butler:—

‘We both look, perchance,’—she said to herself,—‘at this very instant, upon yon hateful banner,—and with the same aversion:—but oh, with what more painful apprehension, is it my fortune to behold it!—Little does he think that Mildred’s eyes are turned upon it. ’Tis well he does not:—his noble heart would chafe itself with ten-fold anguish at the cruel thraldom that separates us.—Yes—’tis well he does not dream that his Mildred is here to witness this dreadful struggle,’—she continued, musing over the subject of her grief,—‘it might tempt him to some rash endeavour to break his bondage.—It is better as it is:—the misery of the thought of our afflictions should be mine only;—the brave patience of a manly soldier is his, and should not be embittered with sorrows that belong not to the perils of the war.’—

‘Sister,’—said Henry, who had stolen up the hill unobserved, and now stood beside Mildred,—‘take courage and keep a good heart!—The very day I often prayed to

see, has come:—and it has come sooner than you promised it should. Here, I am in the field—amongst men—and no play-game is it, either, to keep us busy—but downright earnest battle.—And then, dear sister, you are here to look on;—isn’t that a piece of good luck?—

‘Ah brother—I could talk to you with a boastful tongue, when all around us was peace and security.—I cannot exhort you now. If I dare, I would beg you to stay by my side.—I have need of your comfort and shudder with a chilly fear. Henry, that small hand of yours can do no service to-day—and, in truth, I cannot bear to see you exposed to danger?—

‘In tears, sister!—Come now, this is not like you. Hasn’t Arthur fought many a day and often?—And didn’t you set him on, with good brave words for it?’—

‘I was not there to see him,’—interrupted Mildred:

‘Well, sister, I must get to my post,’—said Henry,—‘I serve as aid-de-camp,—and Horse Shoe is to help me. By-the-by, Mildred,—the sergeant is uncommonly silent and busy to-day. He smells this battle like an old soldier—and I heard him give a few hints to Campbell, concerning the marching up yonder hill:—he told him the column should not display until they got near the top, as Ferguson has no cannon;—and the colonel took it very gladly. Horse Shoe, moreover, thinks we will beat them—and the men have great dependence on what he says. I shall not lose sight of him to-day.’

‘For Heaven’s sake, Henry,’—exclaimed Mildred,—‘my dear brother, do not think of following the sergeant!—I cannot part with you,’—she added with great earnestness,—‘it is an awful time for brother and sister to separate—stay with me?’—

The cadet turned a look upon his sister, of surprise at the new light in which her present fears represented her.

‘I thought, Mildred,’—he said,—‘you were brave. Hav’n’t we come all this way from home to assist Butler? And are you now, for the first time,—just when we are going to pluck him from the midst of the wolves upon that mountain—are you now to weep and play the coward?—sister?’—

‘Go,—Go!’—said Mildred, as she covered her eyes

with her hand,—‘but, dear Henry, remember you have a weak arm and a slender frame, and are not expected to take upon you the duties of a man.’

‘Besides,’—said Mary Musgrove, who had been a silent and perplexed witness of this scene, and who now put in her word of counsel, out of the fullness of her heart,—‘besides, mister Henry Lindsay,—what trouble would it give to sergeant Robinson, and all the rest of them, if you should get lost scampering about the hills, and they shouldn’t know where to find you? It would take up so much of their precious time in looking after you:—and, I am sure, they havn’t much to spare!’

‘You are as valiant as a mouse,’—replied Henry, laughing,—‘and monstrous wise, Mary Musgrove. Do you take care of my sister, and speak a word, now and then, to keep up her spirits,—that is, if your tongue doesn’t grow too thick with fright.—Your teeth chatter now.—A kiss, Mildred.—There:—God bless you!—I must get to my post.’

With these words, Henry bounded off towards the valley to rejoin his comrades. Half way, he met Allen Musgrove, who was now on his return to the top of the hill, whence he had withdrawn for a brief space to hold some converse with Robinson.—

‘A word,’—said Allen to Henry, as they met;—‘you are but a stripling. Remember, that this day’s work is to be wrought by men of might—those who are keen of eye and steady of foot. In the tempest of battle your weight, mister Henry, would be but as a feather in the gale. Yet, in this fight none might be crushed whose fall would bring more anguish than yours.—Let me beg you, as a rash and thoughtless youth, to think of that.—The good lady, your sister’—

‘I cannot stay to hear you,’—interrupted Henry,—‘the column is beginning to move.’

And in a moment, he was at the foot of the hill.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN.

They closed full fast on every side,
No slackness there was found;
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay gasping on the ground.

O dread! it was a grief to see,
And likewise for to hear
The cries of men lying in their gore
And scattered here and there.—*Chevy Chase.*

EVERY corps was now in motion, and the two flanking divisions were soon lost to view in the intervening forest. An incident of some interest to our story, makes it necessary that we should, for a moment, follow the track of Cleveland, in his march upon the left side of the mountain.

The principal road of travel northward, extended along the valley on this side; and, upon this road, Cleveland and Williams conducted their men, until they arrived at a point sufficiently remote to enable them, by ascending the height, to place themselves in Ferguson's rear. They had just reached this point, when they encountered a picquet of the enemy, which, after a few shots, retired hastily up the mountain.

The little out-post had scarcely begun to give ground, before the leading companies of the Whigs had their attention drawn to the movements of a small party of horsemen who, at that moment, appeared in sight upon the road, some distance in advance. They were approaching the American column,—and, as if taken by surprise at the appearance of this force, set spurs to their horses, and made an effort to ride beyond the reach of Cleveland's fire, whilst they took a direction up the mountain towards Ferguson's stronghold. From the equipment of these individuals, it might have been inferred that they were two gentlemen, of some distinction, connected with the royal army, attended by their servants and now about arriving, after a journey, at the British camp. The first was habited in the uniform of an officer; was well

mounted, and displayed a light and active figure, which appeared to advantage in the dexterous management of his horse. The second was a gentleman in a plain riding costume; of slender and well-knit proportions,—and manifestly older than his companion. He rode a powerful and spirited horse, with a confidence and command not inferior to those of his associate. The others in attendance, from their position in the rear, and from the heavy portmanteaus that cumbered their saddles, we might have no difficulty in conjecturing to be menials in the service of the two first.

The course taken by this party brought them obliquely across the range of the fire of the Whigs.

‘It is a general officer and his aid!’—exclaimed one of the subalterns in the advance.—‘Ho there!—Stand.—You are my prisoners!—

‘Spur, spur and away!—For God’s sake, fly!’—Shouted the younger of the two horsemen to his companion, as he dashed the rowels into his steed and fled up the mountain.—‘Push for the top—one moment more and we are out of reach!—

‘Stop them, at all hazards!’—vociferated Cleveland, the instant his eye fell upon them.—‘Quick, lads—level your pieces—they are messengers from Cornwallis.—Rein up, or I fire!’—he called aloud after the flying cavalcade.—

The appeal and threat were unheeded. A score of men left the ranks and ran some distance up the mountain side, and their shots whistled through the forest after the fugitives. One of the attendants was seen to fall, and his horse to wheel round and run back, with a frightened pace, to the valley. The scarlet uniform of the younger horseman, conspicuous through the foliage some distance up the mountain, showed that he had escaped. His elder comrade, when the smoke cleared away, was seen also beyond the reach of Cleveland’s fire;—but his altered pace and his relaxed seat in his saddle, made it apparent that he had received some hurt. This was confirmed when, still nearer to the summit, the stranger was seen to fall upon his horse’s neck, and thence to be lifted to the ground, by three or four soldiers who had hastened to his relief.

These incidents scarcely occupied more time in their performance than I have taken in the narrative; and all reflection upon them, for the present, was lost in the uproar and commotion of the bloody scene that succeeded.

Meanwhile, Campbell and Shelby, each at the head of his men, in the centre division of the army, steadily commenced the ascent of the mountain. A long interval ensued, in which nothing was heard but the tramp of the soldiers and the few words of almost whispered command, as they scaled the height; and it was not until they had nearly reached the summit, that the first peal of battle broke upon the sleeping echoes of the mountain.

Campbell here displayed into line, and his men strode briskly upward until they had come within musket-shot of the British regulars, whose sharp and prolonged volleys, at this instant, suddenly burst forth from the crest of the hill. Peal after peal rattled along the mountain side, and volumes of smoke, silvered by the light of the sun, rolled over and enveloped the combatants.

When the breeze had partially swept away this cloud, and opened glimpses of the battle behind it, the troops of Campbell were seen recoiling before an impetuous charge of the bayonet, in which Ferguson himself led the way. A sudden halt by the retreating Whigs, and a stern front steadfastly opposed to the foe, checked the ardour of his pursuit at an early moment, and, in turn, he was discovered retiring towards his original ground, hotly followed by the mountaineers. Again, the same vigorous onset from the royalists was repeated, and again the shaken bands of Campbell rallied and turned back the rush of battle towards the summit. At last, panting and spent with the severe encounter, both parties stood for a space, eyeing each other with deadly rage, and waiting only to gather breath for the renewal of the strife.

At this juncture, the distant firing heard from either flank, furnished evidence that Sevier and Cleveland had both come into contact with the enemy. The uprising of smoke above the trees showed the seat of the combat to be below the summit on the mountain sides, and that the enemy had there half-way met his foe; whilst the

shouts of the soldiers, alternating between the parties of either army, no less distinctly proclaimed the fact that, at these remote points, the field was disputed with bloody resolution and various success.

It would overtask my poor faculty of description, to give my reader even a faint picture of this rugged battle-field. During the pause of the combatants of the centre, Campbell and Shelby were seen riding along the line and, by speech and gesture, encouraging their soldiers to still more determined efforts. Little need was there for exhortation; rage seemed to have refreshed the strength of the men, who, with loud and fierce huzzas, rushed again to the encounter. They were met with a defiance not less eager than their own; and, for a time, the battle was again obscured under the thick haze engendered by the incessant discharges of fire-arms. From this gloom, a yell of triumph was sometimes heard, as momentary success inspired those who struggled within;—and the frequent twinkle of polished steel glimmering through the murky atmosphere, and the occasional apparition of a speeding horseman, seen for an instant as he came into the clear light, told of the dreadful earnestness and zeal with which the unseen hosts had now joined in conflict. The impression of this contact was various. Parts of each force broke before their antagonists; and in those spots, where the array of the fight might be discerned through the shade of the forest or the smoke of battle, both royalists and Whigs were found, at the same instant, to have driven back detached fragments of their opponents. Foemen were mingled hand to hand, through and among their adverse ranks; and for a time no conjecture might be indulged as to the side to which victory would turn.

The flanking detachments seemed to have fallen into the same confusion, and might have been seen retreating and advancing upon the rough slopes of the mountain, in partisan bodies, separated from their respective lines;—thus giving to the scene an air of bloody riot, more resembling the sudden insurrection of mutineers from the same ranks, than the orderly war of trained soldiers.

Through the din and disorder of this fight, it is fit that I should take time to mark the wanderings of Galbraith

Robinson, whose exploits this day would not ill deserve the pen of Froissart. The doughty sergeant had, for a time, retained his post in the ranks of the Amherst Rangers, and with them had traveailed towards the mountain top, close in the rear of Campbell's line. But when the troops had recoiled before the frequent charges of the royalists, finding his station, at best, but that of an inactive spectator, he made no scruple of deserting his companions and trying his fortune on the field in such form of adventure as best suited his temper. With no other weapon than his customary rifle, he stood his ground when others retreated; and saw the ebb and flow of 'flight and chace' swell around him, according to the varying destiny of the day. In these difficulties, it was his good fortune to escape unhurt;—a piece of luck that may, perhaps, be attributed to the coolness with which he either galloped over an adversary or round him, as the emergency rendered most advisable.

In the midst of this busy occupation, at a moment when one of the refluxes of battle brought him almost to the summit, he descried a small party of British dragoons, stationed some distance in the rear of Ferguson's line, whose detached position seemed to infer some duty unconnected with the general fight. In the midst of these, he thought he recognized the figure and dress of one familiar to his eye. The person thus singled out by the sergeant's glance, stood bare-headed, upon a projecting mass of rock, apparently looking with an eager gaze towards the distant combat.—No sooner did the conjecture, that this might be Arthur Butler, flash across his thought, than he turned his steed back upon the path by which he had ascended, and rode with haste towards the Rangers.

'Stephen Foster,'—he said, as he galloped up to the lieutenant, and drew his attention by a tap of the hand upon his shoulder—'I have business for you, man,—you are but wasting your time here:—pick me out a half dozen of your best fellows and bring them with you after me.—Quick—Stephen,—quick!'

The lieutenant of the Rangers collected the desired party, and rode after the sergeant, who now conducted

this handful of men, with as much rapidity as the broken character of the ground allowed, by a circuit for a considerable distance along the right side of the mountain, until they reached the top. The point at which they gained the summit, brought them between Ferguson's line and the dragoons, who, it was soon perceived, were the party charged with the custody of Butler, and who had been thus detached in the rear for the more safe guardianship of the prisoner. Horse Shoe's manœuvre had completely cut them off from their friends in front, and they had no resource but to defend themselves against the threatened assault, or fly towards the parties who were at this moment engaged with the flanking divisions of the Whigs. They were taken by surprise—and Horse Shoe, perceiving the importance of an immediate attack, dashed onward, along the ridge of the mountain, with precipitate speed, calling out to his companions to follow. In a moment, the dragoons were engaged in a desperate pell-mell with the Rangers.

‘Upon them, Stephen!—Upon them bravely, my lads!—Huzza for major Butler!—Fling the major across your saddle—the first that reaches him,’—shouted the sergeant with a voice that was heard above all the uproar of battle.—‘What ho—James Curry!—he cried out, as soon as he detected the presence of his old acquaintance in this throng:—‘Stand your ground, if you are a man!’

The person to whom this challenge was directed had made an effort to escape towards a party of his friends, whom he was about summoning to his aid; and in the attempt had already ridden some distance into the wood, whither the sergeant had eagerly followed him.

‘Ah ha, old Truepenny, are you there?’—exclaimed Curry, turning short upon his pursuer, and affecting to laugh as if in scorn—‘Horse Shoe Robinson, well met!—By G—,’—he added sternly—‘I have not seen a better sight to-day, than that fool's head of yours upon this hill. No, not even when, just now, Patrick Ferguson sent your yelping curs back to hide themselves behind the trees.’—

‘Come on, James!’—cried Horse Shoe—I have no time to talk. We have an old reckoning to settle, which,

perhaps, you mought remember. I am a man of my word; and, besides, I have set my eye upon major Butler,'—he added, with a tone and look that were both impressed with the fierce passion of the scene around him.

'The devil blast you, and major Butler to boot!'—exclaimed Curry, roused by Horse Shoe's air of defiance.—'To it, bully!—It shall be short work between us,—and bloody,'—he shouted as he discharged a pistol-shot at the sergeant's breast; which failing to take effect, he flung the weapon upon the ground, brandished his sword and spurred immediately against his challenger. The sweep of the broadsword fell upon the barrel of Horse Shoe's uplifted rifle, and, in the next instant, the broad hand of our lusty yeoman had seized the trooper by the collar, and dragged him from his horse. The two soldiers came to the ground, locked in a mutual embrace—and, for a brief moment, a desperate trial of strength was exhibited in the effort to gain their feet.

'I have you there,'—said Robinson, as at length, with a flushed cheek, quick breath and blood-shot eye, he rose from the earth, and shook the dragoon from him, who fell backward on his knee.—'Curse you, James Curry, for a fool and villain!—You almost drive me, against my will, to the taking of your life.—I don't want your blood. You are beaten, man,—and must say so.—I grant you quarter, upon condition'

'Look to yourself!—I ask no terms from you,'—interrupted Curry, as suddenly springing to his feet, he now made a second pass, which was swung with such unexpected vigour at the head of his adversary, that Horse Shoe had barely time to catch the blow, as before, upon his rifle. The broad-sword was broken by the stroke, and one of the fragments of the blade struck the sergeant upon the forehead, inflicting a wound that covered his face with blood. Horse Shoe reeled a step or two from his ground, and clubbing the rifle—as it is called—by grasping the barrel towards the muzzle, he paused but an instant to dash the blood from his brow with his hand,—and then, with one lusty sweep, to which his sudden anger gave both precision and energy, he brought the piece full upon the head of his foe, with such fatal effect as to

bury the lock in the trooper's brain, whilst the stock was shattered into splinters. Curry, almost without a groan, fell dead across a ledge of rock at his feet.

'The grudge is done—and the fool has met his deservings,'—was Horse Shoe's brief comment upon the event, as he gazed sullenly, for an instant, upon the dead corpse. He had no time to tarry. The rest of his party were still engaged with the troopers of the guard, who now struggled to preserve the custody of their prisoner. The bridle rein of Captain Peter had been caught by one of the Rangers, and the good steed was now quickly delivered up to his master, who flinging himself again into his saddle, rushed into the throng of combatants. The few dragoons dispirited by the loss of their leader, and stricken with panic at this strenuous onset, turned to flight,—leaving Butler in the midst of his friends.—

'God bless you, major?'—shouted Robinson, as he rode up to his old comrade, who, unarmed, had looked upon the struggle with an interest corresponding to the stake he had in the event.—'Up, man,—here, spring across the pommel.—Now, boys, down the mountain, for your lives! Huzza, huzza!—we have won him back!'—he exclaimed, as seizing Butler's arm, he lifted him upon the neck of Captain Peter, and bounded away, at full speed, towards the base of the mountain, followed by Foster and his party.

The reader may imagine the poignancy of Mildred's emotions, as she sat beside Allen Musgrove and his daughter on the knoll, and watched the busy and stirring scene before her. The centre division of the assailing army was immediately in her view, on the opposite face of the mountain, and no incident of the battle in this quarter escaped her notice. She could distinctly perceive the motions of the Amherst Rangers, to whom she turned her eyes with a frequent and eager glance, as the corps with which her brother Henry was associated; and when the various fortune of the fight disclosed to her the occasional retreat of her friends, before the vigorous sallies of the enemy, or brought to her ear the renewed and angry volleys of musquetry, she clenched Mary Musgrove's arm, with a nervous grasp, and uttered short and anxious ejaculations that showed the terror of her mind.

'I see Mister Henry, yet,'—said Mary, as Campbell's troops rallied from the last shock, and again moved towards the summit,—'I see him plainly, ma'am—for I know his green dress, and caught the glitter of his brass bugle in the sun.—And, there now—all is smoke again:—Mercy, how stubborn are these men!—And there is Mister Henry once more—near the top.—He is safe, ma'am'—

'How earnestly,'—said Mildred, unconsciously speaking aloud as she surveyed the scene,—'oh, how earnestly do I wish this battle was done!—I would rather, Mr. Musgrave, be in the midst of yonder crowd of angry men, could I but have their recklessness, than here in safety to be tortured with my present feelings.'—

'In God is our trust, madam,'—replied the miller,—'His arm is abroad over the dangerous paths, for a shield and buckler to them that put their trust in him.—Ha!—there is Ferguson's white horse, rushing, with a dangling rein and empty saddle, down the mountain, through Campbell's ranks:—the rider has fallen—and there, madam—there, look on it!—is a white flag waving in the hands of a British officer.—The fight is done.—Hark, our friends are cheering with a loud voice!'—

'Thank Heaven—thank Heaven!'—exclaimed Mildred, as she sprang upon her feet,—'it is even so!'

The loud huzzas of the troops rose upon the air;—the firing ceased;—the flag of truce fluttered in the breeze, and the confederated bands of the mountaineers; from every quarter of the late battle, were seen hurrying towards the crest of the mountain, and mingling amongst the ranks of the conquered foe. Again and again, the clamorous cheering of the victors broke forth from the mountain-top, and echoed along the neighbouring valleys.

During this wild clamour and busy movement, a party of horsemen were seen, through the occasional intervals of the low wood that skirted the valley on the right, hastening from the field, with an eager swiftness, towards the spot where Mildred and her companions were stationed.

As they swept along the base of the mountain, and approached the knoll, they were lost to view behind the projecting angles of the low hills that formed the ravine, through which, my reader is aware, the road held its

course. When they reappeared, it was in ascending the abrupt acclivity of the knoll and within fifty paces of the party on the top of it.—

It was now apparent that the advancing company consisted of Stephen Foster and three or four of the Rangers, led by Horse Shoe Robinson, with Butler still seated before him,—as when the sergeant first caught him up, in the fight. These were at the same moment overtaken by Henry Lindsay, who had turned back from the mountain, at the first announcement of the victory, to bring the tidings to his sister.—

Mildred's cheek grew deadly pale, and her frame shook, as the cavalcade rushed into her presence.—

‘There,—take him!’—cried Horse Shoe, with an effort to laugh, but which seemed to be half converted into a quaver by the agitation of his feelings—as, springing to the ground, he swung Butler from the horse, with scarce more effort than he would have used in handling a child,—‘take him, ma'am. I promised myself to-day, that I'd give him to you.—And, now, you've got him!—That's a good reward for all your troubles.—God bless us—but I'm happy to-day!’—

‘MY HUSBAND!—MY DEAR HUSBAND!’—were the only articulate words that escaped Mildred's lips, as she fell senseless into the arms of Arthur Butler.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE victory was won. In the last assault, Campbell had reached the crest of the mountain, and the royalists had given ground with decisive indications of defeat. Ferguson, in the hopeless effort to rally his soldiers, had flung himself into their van,—but a bullet, at this instant, reached his heart;—he fell from his seat, and his white horse, which had been conspicuous in the crowd of battle, bounded wildly through the ranks of the Whigs, and made his way down the mountain side.

Campbell pressed onward, driving the royalists before him. For a moment, the discomfited bands hoped to join their comrades in the rear, and, by a united effort, to effect a retreat: but the parties led by Sevier and Cleveland, cheered by the shouts of their victorious companions, urged their attacks with new vigour, and won the hill in time to intercept the fugitives. All hopes of escape being thus at an end, a white flag was displayed, in token of submission, and the remnant of Ferguson's late proud and boastful army, now amounting to between eight and nine hundred men, surrendered to the assailants.—

It has scarcely ever happened that a battle has been fought, in which the combatants met with keener individual exasperation than in this. The mortal hatred which embittered the feelings of Whig and Tory along this border, here vented itself in the eagerness of conflict, and gave the impulse to every blow that was struck—rendering the fight, from beginning to end, relentless, vindictive and bloody. The remembrance of the thousand cruelties practised by the royalists, during the brief Tory dominion to which my narrative has been confined, was fresh in the minds of the stern and hardy men of the mountains, who had pursued their foe with such fierce animosity to this his last stage. Every one had some wrong to tell, and burned with an unquenchable rage of revenge. It was, therefore, with a yell of triumph, that they saw the symbol of submission raised aloft by the enemy;—and, for a space, the forest rang with their loud and reiterated huzzas.

Many brave men fell on either side. Upon the slopes of the mountain and on its summit, the bodies of the dying and dead lay scattered amongst the rocks,—and the feeble groans of the wounded mingled with the fierce tones of exultation from the living. The Whigs sustained a grievous loss in colonel Williams, who had been struck down in the moment of victory. He was young, ardent and brave; and his many soldier-like virtues, combined with a generous and amiable temper, had rendered him a cherished favourite with the army. His

death served still more to increase the exacerbation of the conquerors against the conquered.

The sun was yet an hour high, when the battle was done. The Whigs were formed in two lines on the ridge of the mountain; and the prisoners, more numerous than their captors, having laid down their arms, were drawn up, in detached columns, on the intervening ground. There were many sullen and angry glances exchanged, during this period of suspense, between victors and vanquished;—and it was with a fearful rankling of inward wrath, that many of the Whigs detected, in the columns of the prisoners, some of their bitterest persecutors.

This spirit was partially suppressed in the busy occupation that followed. Preparations were directed to be made for the night-quarters of the army; and the whole host was, accordingly, ordered to march to the valley.—The surgeons of each party were already fully employed in their vocation. The bodies of the wounded were strewed around; and, for the protection of such as were not in a condition to be moved, shelters were made of the boughs of trees, and fires kindled to guard them from the early frost of the season.—All the rest retired slowly to the appointed encampment.

Whilst Campbell was intent upon these cares, a messenger came to summon him to a scene of unexpected interest. He was informed that a gentleman, not attached to the army, had been dangerously wounded in the fight, and now lay at the further extremity of the mountain ridge. It was added, that he earnestly desired an interview with the commanding officer. Campbell lost no time in attending to the request.

Upon repairing to the spot, his attention was drawn to a stranger who lay upon the ground. His wan and haggard cheek, and restless eye showed that he suffered acute pain; and the blood upon his cloak, which had been spread beneath him, indicated the wound to have been received in the side. A private soldier of the British army was his only attendant. To Campbell's solicitous and kind inquiry, he announced himself, in a voice that was almost over-mastered by his bodily anguish, to be Philip Lindsay, of Virginia.—

'You behold,'—he said,—'an unhappy father in pursuit of his children. Then, after a pause, he continued,—"my daughter Mildred—I have been told is near me:—I would see her—and quickly?"—

"God have mercy on us!"—exclaimed Campbell,—'is this the father of the lady who has sought my protection?—Wounded too—and badly, I fear!—Where is major Butler, who was lately prisoner with Ferguson?"—he said, addressing the attendant.—'Go, go, sir,'—he added, speaking to the same person,—'bring me the first surgeon you can find—and direct some three or four men from the ranks to come to your aid. Lose no time.'

The soldier went instantly upon the errand, and soon returned with the desired assistance. Lindsay's wound had been already staunched, and all that remained to be done was to put him in some place of shelter and comfort. A cottage at the foot of the mountain was pointed out by Campbell; a litter was constructed, and the sick man was borne upon the shoulders of four attendants to the designated spot. Meantime, Campbell rode off to communicate the discovery he had made to Mildred and her brother.

Lindsay's story, since we last parted from him, may be briefly told. He and Tyrrel had journeyed into the low country of Virginia, to meet the friends of the royal government. These had wavered, and were not to be brought together. A delay ensued, during which Tyrrel had prevailed upon Lindsay to extend his journey into North Carolina; whence, after an ineffectual effort to bring the Tory party to some decisive step, they both returned to the Dove Cote,—having been nearly three weeks absent.

Upon their arrival, the afflicting intelligence met Lindsay of the departure of Mildred and her brother, for the seat of war. Mildred's letter was delivered to him; and its contents almost struck him dumb.—It related the story of Arthur Butler's misfortunes, and announced, that, for nearly a year past, Mildred had been the wedded wife of the captive officer. The marriage had been solemnized in the preceding autumn, in a hasty moment, as Butler

travelled south to join the army. The only witnesses were mistress Dimock,—under whose roof it had occurred,—Henry Lindsay and the clergyman. The motives that induced this marriage were explained: both Mildred and Arthur hoped, by this irremediable step, to reconcile Lindsay to the event, and to turn his mind from its unhappy broodings:—the increased exasperation of his feelings, during the succeeding period, prevented the disclosure which Mildred had again and again essayed to make. The recent dangers which had beset Arthur Butler, had determined her to fly to his rescue. As **HIS WIFE** she felt it to be her duty, and she had, accordingly, resolved to encounter the peril of the journey.—

For a day or two after the perusal of this letter, Lindsay fell into a deep melancholy. His presentiments seemed to have been fatally realized, and his hopes suddenly destroyed. From this despondency, Tyrrel's assiduous artifice aroused him. He proposed to Lindsay the pursuit of his children—in the hope of thus luring him into Cornwallis's camp, and connecting him with the fortunes of the war. The chances of life, he reasoned, were against Butler, if indeed—as Tyrrel had ground to hope—that officer were not already the victim of the snares that had been laid for him.—

Upon this advice, Lindsay had set out for Cornwallis's head-quarters, where he arrived within a week after the interview of Mildred and Henry with the British chief.

Whilst he delayed here, he received the tidings that his daughter had abandoned her homeward journey, and turned aside in quest of Butler. This determined him to continue his pursuit. Tyrrel still accompanied him; and the two travellers having arrived at the moment of the attack upon King's mountain, Lindsay was persuaded by his companion to make the rash adventure which, we have already seen, had been the cause of his present misfortune.

It is not my purpose to attempt a description of the scene in the cottage, where Arthur Butler and his wife and Henry, first saw Lindsay stretched upon a rude pallet, and suffering the anguish of a dangerous wound. It is sufficient to say that, in the midst of the deep grief of

the by-standers, Lindsay was composed and tranquil—like one who thought it vain to struggle with fate. ‘I have foreseen this day, and felt its coming,’—he muttered, in a low and broken voice,—‘it has happened as it was ordained.—I have unwisely struggled against my doom.—There,—take it,’—he added, as he stretched forth his hand to Butler, and in tones, scarcely audible, breathed out—‘God bless you, my children!—I forgive you.’—

During the night fever ensued, and with it came delirium. The patient acquired strength from his disease, and raved wildly, in a strain familiar to his waking superstition. The same vision of fate and destiny haunted his imagination; and he almost frightened his daughter from beside his couch, with the fervid eloquence of his madness.—

The cottage was situated near half a mile from the encampment of the army. Towards day-light, Lindsay had sunk into slumber, and the attendant surgeon began to entertain hopes that the patient might successfully struggle with his malady. Mildred and Mary Musgrove kept watch in the apartment, whilst Butler, with Horse Shoe Robinson and Allen Musgrove, remained anxiously awake in the adjoining room. Henry Lindsay, wearied with the toils of the preceding day,—and old Isaac the negro, not so much from the provocation of previous labour as from constitutional torpor—lay stretched in deep sleep upon the floor.

Such was the state of things when, near sunrise, a distant murmur reached the ears of those who were awake in the cottage. These sounds attracted the notice of Horse Shoe, who immediately afterwards stole out of the apartment and repaired to the camp. During his walk thither the uproar became more distinct, and shouts were heard from a crowd of soldiers who were discovered in a confused and agitated mass in the valley, at some distance from the encampment. The sergeant hastened to this spot and, upon his arrival, was struck with the shocking sight of the bodies of some eight or ten of the Tory prisoners suspended to the limbs of a large tree.

The repose of the night had not allayed the thirst of revenge amongst the Whigs. On the contrary, the oppor-

tunity of conference and deliberation had only given a more fatal certainty to their purpose. The recent executions which had been permitted in Cornwallis' camp, after the battle of Camden, no less than the atrocities lately practised by some of the Tories who were now amongst the captured, suggested the idea of a signal retribution. The obnoxious individuals were dragged forth from their ranks, at early dawn, and summary punishment was inflicted by the excited soldiery, in the manner which we have described,—in spite of all remonstrance or command.

This dreadful work was still in progress when Horse Shoe arrived. The crowd were, at that moment, forcing along to the spot of execution, a trembling wretch whose gaunt form, crouching beneath the hands that held him, and pitiful supplications for mercy, announced him to the sergeant as an old acquaintance. The unfortunate man had caught a glance of Robinson, and, almost frantic with despair, sprang with a tiger's leap from the grasp of those who held him—and, in an instant, threw his arms around the sergeant's neck, where he clung with the hold of a drowning man.—

‘Oh save me,—save me—Horse Shoe Robinson!’—he exclaimed wildly.—‘Friend Horse Shoe, save me!’

‘I am no friend of yours, Wat Adair,’—said Robinson, sternly.—

‘Speak for me—Galbraith—speak, for old acquaintance sake!’—

‘Hold!’—said Robinson to the crowd who had gathered round to pluck the fugitive from his present refuge—‘One word, friends—stand back—I have somewhat to say in this matter.’—

‘He gave Butler into Hugh Habershaw's hands,’—cried out some of the crowd.

‘He took the price of blood, and sold Butler's life for money—he shall die!’—shouted others.

‘No words!’—exclaimed many,—‘but up with him!’—

‘Mr. Robinson,’—screamed Adair, with tears starting from his eyes—‘only hear me!—I was forced to take sides against major Butler.—The Tories would have

burnt down my house—they suspected me—I was obliged—Mike Lynch was witness—mercy—mercy!”—and here the frightened culprit cried loud and bitterly.—

‘Friends,’—said Horse Shoe, calmly to the multitude—‘there is better game to hunt than this mountain-cat.—Let me have my way.’—

‘None has a better right than Horse Shoe Robinson,’—said a speaker from the group—‘to say what ought to be done to Wat Adair.—Speak out, Horse Shoe!’—

‘Speak!—We leave it to you,’—shouted some of the leaders:—and instantly the crowd fell back and formed a circle round Horse Shoe and Adair.

‘I give you your choice,’—said the sergeant, addressing the captive,—‘for though your iniquities, Wat Adair, deserve that you should have been the first that was strung up to yonder tree,—yet you shall have your choice, to tell us fully and truly—without holding back name of high or low—who put you on to ambush major Arthur Butler’s life at Grindall’s Ford.—Tell us that, to our satisfaction,—and answer all other questions beside, that we may ax you—and you shall have your life—taking, however, one hundred lashes to the back of it.’—

‘I will confess all, before God, truly,’—cried Adair with eagerness.—‘James Curry told me of your coming, and gave me and Mike Lynch, money to help Hugh Habershaw.’—

‘James Curry had a master in the business,’—said Robinson:—‘His name?’—

Adair hesitated for an instant and stammered out ‘captain St. Jermyn.’—

‘He was at your house?—Speak it, man, or think of the rope?’

‘He was there,’—said Adair.

‘By my soul! Wat Adair—if you do not come out with the whole truth,’—said Robinson, with angry earnestness,—‘I take back my promise.—Tell me all you know.’—

‘Curry acted by the captain’s directions,’—continued the woodsman,—‘he was well paid for it—as he told me—and would have got more, if a quarrel amongst Haber-

shaw's people hadn't stopped them from taking major Butler's life.—So, I have heard from the men myself?—

‘Well sir?’—

‘That's all,’—replied Adair.

‘Do you know nothing about the court martial?’—asked Robinson.

‘Nothing—except that as the major wasn't killed at the Ford—it was thought best to have a trial, wherein James Curry and Hugh Habershaw,—as I was told—had agreed to swear against the major's life.’—

‘And were paid for it?’—

‘It was upon a consideration, in course,’—replied Adair.—

‘And captain St. Jermyn, contrived this?’—

‘It was said,’—answered Adair,—‘that the captain left it all to Curry,—and rather seemed to take major Butler's side himself at the trial. He didn't want to be known in the business!’

‘Where is this captain St. Jermyn?’—demanded many voices.

This interrogatory was followed by the rush of a party towards the quarter in which the prisoners were assembled—and, after a lapse of time which seemed incredibly short for the performance of the deed, the unhappy victim of this tumultuary wrath was seen struggling in the agonies of death, as he hung from one of the boughs of the same tree which had supplied the means of the other executions.

By this time Butler and Henry Lindsay, attracted by the shouts that reached them at the cottage, had arrived at the scene of these dreadful events. Wat Adair was, at this moment, undergoing the punishment for which his first sentence was commuted. The lashes were inflicted by a sturdy arm, upon his uncovered back—and it was remarkable that the wretch who but lately had sunk, with the most slavish fear, under the threat of death, now bore his stripes with a fortitude that seemed to disdain complaint or even the confession of pain. Butler and Henry hurried with a natural disgust from this spectacle, and soon found themselves near the spot where the lifeless

forms of the victims of military vengeance were suspended from the tree.

‘Gracious Heaven!’—exclaimed Butler,—‘is not that St. Jermyn?’—What has he done to provoke this doom?’

‘It is Tyrrel?’—ejaculated Henry.—‘Major Butler—it is Tyrrel!—That face, black and horrible as it is to look at—I would know it among a thousand!’

‘Indeed!’—said Butler, gazing with a melancholy earnestness upon the scene,—and speaking scarce above his breath,—‘is it so?—Tyrrel and St. Jermyn the same person!—This is a strange mystery.’—

Robinson, at this moment, approached, and, in answer to Butler’s questions, told the whole story of the commotions that had just agitated the camp.—

‘St. Jermyn, was not with Ferguson?’—said Butler, when the sergeant had finished his narrative,—‘How came he here to-day?’—

‘First or last,’—replied Robinson,—‘it is my observation, major, that these schemers and contrivers against other’s lives are sure to come to account. The devil put it into this St. Jermyn’s head to make Ferguson a visit. He came yesterday with Mr. Lindsay, and got the poor gentleman his hurt.—You mought remember James Curry, and the man he sarved, when we saw him at the Blue Ball,—him they called Tyrrel?—This is that same Tyrrel—master and man have travelled one road.’

The scene was now closed. The business of the day called the troops to other labours. Campbell felt the necessity of an immediate retreat with his prisoners to the mountains, and his earliest orders directed the army to prepare for the march.

When Butler returned to the cottage, he found himself surrounded by a mournful group. The malady of Lindsay had unexpectedly taken a fatal turn. Mildred and Henry were seated by the couch of their father, watching, in mute anguish, the last ebbings of life. The dying man was composed and apparently free from pain,—and the few words he spoke were of forgiveness and resignation.

In the midst of their sorrow and silence, the inmates of the dwelling had their attention awakened by the military music of the retiring army.—These cheerful

sounds vividly contrasted with the grief of the mourners, and told of the professional indifference of soldiers to the calamities of war.—By degrees, the martial tones became more faint, as the troops receded up the valley;—and before they were quite lost to the ear, Campbell and Shelby appeared at the door of the cottage to explain the urgency of their present departure, and to take a sad farewell of their friends.—

Stephen Foster, with Harry, Winter and a party of the Rangers, remained behind to await the movements of Butler. Horse Shoe Robinson, Allen Musgrove and his daughter were in constant attendance.

Here ends my story.

In a lonely thicket, close upon the margin of the little brook which waters the valley on the eastern side of King's mountain, the traveller of the present day, may be shown an almost obliterated mound, and, hard by, he will see the fragment of a rude tombstone, on which is carved the letters P. L. This vestige marks the spot where the remains of Philip Lindsay were laid, until the restoration of peace allowed them to be transported to the Dove Cote.

* * * * *

In the winter of 1818-'19, my business called me to Carolina, whither I journeyed alone, with my baggage strapped behind my saddle, in that independent guise that left me at liberty to rove wheresoever my sturdy steed,—for whose good qualities I yet retain an affectionate remembrance,—was able to make his way. The weather was as balmy as October, and the buoyancy of my spirits filled my mind with cheerful thoughts, and gave a zest to my lonesome journey, which took away all its fatigue.

I was already in the district formerly known as Ninety-Six. The country around me was a wilderness, broken by some of the most magnificent mountains in the United States. The few inhabitants of this region were principally the tenants of the bounty lands which the state of South Carolina had conferred upon the soldiers of the revolution, and their settlements, made upon the rich bottoms of the river valleys, were separated from each other by large tracts of forest.

Towards sun-down, after a long day's ride, I found myself plodding along the solitary track which traversed this ocean of wood, and running over, in my mind, with some uneasy doubts, the probability of my finding a resting-place for the night. I had seen no one for the last three or four hours to inquire of, and I was not certain of my road.

During this suspense, a lad, apparently not above ten years of age, mounted, bare-back, on a fine horse, suddenly emerged from the wood, about fifty paces ahead of me, and galloped along the road in the same direction that I myself was taking.—I quickened my speed with a

view to overtake him, but, from the rapidity of his flight, I found myself, at the end of a mile, no nearer than when I commenced the pursuit. Some open country in front, however, showed me that I was approaching a settlement. Almost at the moment of making this discovery, I observed that the lad was lying on the ground by the road side.—I hastened to him, dismounted, and found him sadly in want of assistance.—His horse had run off with him—had thrown him, and dislocated (as it afterwards appeared) his collar bone.

Whilst I was busy in rendering such aid as I could afford, I was joined by a gentleman of a venerable exterior, the father of the youth, who came from a dwelling house near at hand, which in the engrossment of the scene I had not observed. We lifted the boy in our arms and bore him into the house.

I was now in comfortable quarters for the night. The gentleman was colonel ——, and we very soon found ourselves upon that footing of acquaintance, which the circumstance leading to our introduction might be supposed to create. The lad was laid upon a bed in the room where we sat—in great pain from the injury he had received, and requiring immediate attention. The kindest hospitality was extended to myself, and I was invited into the family consultation as to what was proper to be done for the sufferer.—I never in my life so much regretted the want of some skill in surgery:—Alas, I was utterly incompetent to make a suggestion! The family seemed to be no less so;—and the nearest physician resided thirty miles from the spot.

In this difficulty, a thought occurred to colonel ——, which was immediately carried into execution.—He called one of his sons to him, and directed him to get a horse and ride over for Horse Shoe Robinson:—‘Tell him,’—said the colonel,—‘what has happened to your brother,—and to come at once.’—

In the absence of the messenger, the boy grew easier.—Colonel —— sat down with me by the fire, and, with many expressions of friendly interest, inquired into the course of my journey, and the thousand matters that may

be supposed to interest a frontier-settler, in his intercourse with one just from the world of busy life.

In less than an hour, Horse Shoe Robinson arrived. Never have I seen such a figure of a man!—He was then some years beyond seventy, and time seemed to have broken its billows over his front, only as the ocean dashes against a rock—I have already described him as in his youth. It is sufficient to say that I saw the same man of mould in what was, to him, a green old age.—

He administered to the boy with a ready skill—prepared a warm embrocation,—worked at the dislocated joint, and soon set all to rights. So much so, that when the physician, who had also been sent for, arrived, he had nothing to do.

Horse Shoe and myself sat by the fire until near daylight.—He was a man of truth:—every expression of his face showed it. He was modest besides, and attached no value to his exploits. I wormed the story out of him,—and made a night of it, in which not even my previous fatigue inclined me to sleep.

The reader will thus see how I came into possession of much of this narrative.

Some years afterwards, my rambles in Virginia supplied the rest. I there learned that Arthur Butler and Mildred, soon after the melancholy event which followed the victory at King's mountain, returned to the Dove Cote,—where, notwithstanding the fatal presentiment in regard to the fortunes of his house, which had thrown so dark a colour upon the life of Philip Lindsay, they lived long enough after the revolution to see grow up around them, a prosperous and estimable family.

Mary Musgrove, too, attended Mildred, and attained an advanced, and I hope, a happy old age, at the Dove Cote.

Wat Adair, I have heard it said in Carolina, died about a year after the battle of King's mountain of a horrible distemper,—supposed to have been produced by the bite of a rabid wolf.—I would fain believe, for the sake of poetical justice, that this was true.

Another item of intelligence, to be found in the history of the war, may have some reference to our tale. I find that, in the summer of 1781, colonel Butler was engaged in the pursuit of Cornwallis in his retreat from Albemarle towards Williamsburg:—my inquiries do not enable me to say, with precision, whether it was our friend Arthur Butler who had met this promotion.—His sufferings in the cause certainly deserved such a reward.

THE END.

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